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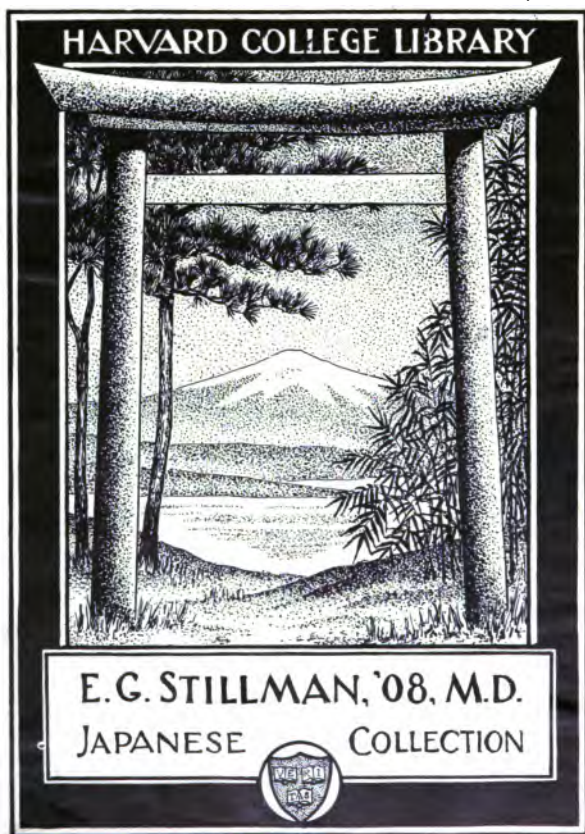
ANJIRO

A story of the introduction
of Christianity into Japan



S. P. G.

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J. Stillman
1938



TWO OF THE 500 RAKAN (BUDDHA'S CHIEF DISCIPLES), FROM A
TEMPLE AT NAGOYA.

ANJIRO

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE DEALING WITH THE
INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO JAPAN
IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

BY

MRS. DEVENISH MEARES

(Miss FLORENCE MOORE)

ILLUSTRATED

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts

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NOTE.

THIS story has been largely re-edited and in part rewritten since it was received from its original writer.

S.P.G., Editorial Secretary.

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CHAPTER I.

"PADRE! Padre! Stop! stop! of thy mercy I pray thee; I have travelled over a thousand miles on the chance of seeing thee, and have never rested day nor night for thinking that thereby I might gain some kindly counsel."

The man thus accosted paused in his hurried tread through the streets of the seaport town of Goa, and gently putting on one side a little crowd of people who thronged about him, drew the speaker to a retired spot, and looked him full in the face.

"Say on," he said kindly, "what is it I can do for thee?"

The tone was encouraging, and Anjiro, the rich Japanese noble—proud and reserved by nature—felt that he had not sacrificed his pride in vain in trying to unburden his mind to a poor, travelling missionary, and an utter stranger.

He did not, however, reply immediately, but in his turn, gazed full upon the Padre, as if wishing to take entire stock of him, before unburdening his mind. What did he see? A man some five-and-thirty years of age, with long auburn locks flowing on the breeze, a pair of keen blue eyes, and sweet impelling ex-

pression, which made him yearn to call him "friend." Simply clad in a long friar's frock, carrying in one hand a well-worn Bible, and in the other a little bell, with a silver cross hanging round his neck. Such in the year of grace 1548, was Father Xavier—the Apostle of India. Then Anjiro plucked up heart and spoke:—

"Father," said he, "I dare not speak to thee in the open street, for I am fearful lest some one should overhear me. I have much to tell thee, and perhaps when thou hearest all, thou wilt have nought to say to me." Then lowering his voice to a whisper—"My hands are stained with blood. I can say no more now—I dare not. Ah! perhaps now thou wilt shrink from me."

And the rich noble looked timidly this time into the poor man's face.

"I shrink not from thee. Am I not the ambassador of Him Who hath said, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'?" And the Padre clasped Anjiro's hand warmly within his own. "But I will hear thy story later. See, the crowd are waiting for me down there by the shipping, where I am to hold to-night our Mission Service. I ring this bell many a time and oft in Goa, to gather the people about me, while I warn them of the Judgment to come, and of the love and mercy waiting for them, if they will only repent. Time passes! I must go." And the silvery tones of the bell tinkled in the air, as Father Xavier once more hurried along, followed closely by Anjiro.

Anjiro, in the course of his travels, had learned a smattering of several languages, and Portuguese, spoken

then chiefly in Goa—as it is to this day—was fairly understood by him, though he was unable to read or write it. He was longing to hear something more about the message of comfort and mercy which the Padre could give, and was thankful that his utterance was slow and distinct, so that he could follow it. It was through a ship homeward-bound from Malacca, and unlading at the port of Nagasaki in Japan, that he had first heard the news of the good Father, who was introducing a wonderful new religion into India, a religion which could give solace and happiness to mortals such as was never experienced before. Anjiro was in sore need of comfort, for he had been outlawed from society through killing a comrade in a sudden fit of anger, and a strong hint had been given him by the Government to leave the shores of Nippon (the real name of the country which we call Japan) as speedily as possible. So he had looked about for a ship and a place whence to fly, and by good luck had chanced to make a friend of the captain of a ship home from Malacca. This captain had come under the influence of Father Xavier, and had been strangely moved by him. He was returning to Malacca shortly, he said, and Anjiro might safely take refuge in his vessel, and perhaps stay in India for a time, till the storm of indignation against him had blown over.

Anjiro had eagerly accepted the proffered shelter, not merely as a means of extricating himself from an awkward situation, but because remorse for the sad deed which his wicked temper had caused, was making him very unhappy. He had been brought up in the

religion of Buddha, and had a high code of moral honour, but his highly strung sensitive nature felt a reaching out and craving for something which he knew Buddha's creed was powerless to supply. Then in a fit of restless anger he had done a foul deed, and all looked dark and gloomy. Self-destruction tempted him to end his misery, and he knew that all Japan would applaud the deed as a fitting way of expiating his crime. Still, something held him back; at any rate he would take this voyage first; he would see the "good Father," and failing to obtain comfort there, he could but fall on his sword and die like a gentleman. Thus it was that he had come to take this long journey. Arrived at Malacca, he had been disappointed to find that Father Xavier was not there, but was engaged in mission work among the Portuguese and natives in Goa. Anjiro, fearful of losing an interview after travelling so far, had hurried thither, and now to his great joy, the longed-for hour had come.

The silvery tones of the Padre's bell, as it rang out that sweet May evening, seemed to ring a message of peace and joy to Anjiro's soul, and as he gathered with the crowd round the steps of the quay, and listened to the old, old story of the love of Jesus Christ for sinners, a flood of light and gladness seemed to roll over his soul. Oh! to know more of this man and the God Whom he worshipped! That was now his one absorbing thought.

Father Xavier's eye rested ever and anon with pity on that aristocratic figure, as he stood head and shoulders higher than the crowd, drinking in with

feverish eagerness the Gospel message, and after the service was over, he beckoned Anjiro aside.

"Where art thou staying, friend?" he inquired, "I must see thee and hear thy story."

Anjiro mentioned a quiet lodging, and invited the Padre to partake there of some refreshment. So together they repaired to a house in one of the side streets of Goa, and while Father Xavier enjoyed a simple meal of curried lentils and rice, Anjiro poured out all his troubles. It was a long story of a foul deed done in a sudden fit of anger, of fightings without, and fears within, of longings to be good, of an oppressed country, where the Emperor was but a sham ruler, and where the whole power was vested in military despots. He told how tired noble and peasant alike had become of the cold philosophy of Buddha, and how souls were straining and struggling, and groping to find light!

Father Xavier's face glowed as he heard the story. Here was a rough diamond, which, if cut and trimmed for the Master's use, might shine as a star, and turn many to righteousness in his own country. But the diamond would need much testing first.

The sin of murder was on the soul; all at present was dark within. But the Holy Spirit had begun to influence him.

"That was a wonderful message you told us to-night, Father," said Anjiro, "of Jesus Christ dying for us on Calvary. He forgave the poor thief upon the Cross! Oh! that I could believe that He is my Saviour and died for me. In our religion of Buddhism there is one Buddha, who they say appeared on earth, and who

corresponds in many ways to your Jesus ; but of Calvary or of One who died to save men from sin we Japanese have never heard. Oh! that it were true. Oh! that I could accept the doctrine, and go home to tell others about it. It would bring joy and peace into a land which outside is blue sky, and sunshine, and flowers, but inside is unhappy. But for myself, stained beyond forgiveness, I fear there is no hope."

Father Xavier had finished his simple repast, and as he saw the young Japanese noble cover his face with his hands to hide the flowing tears, he came over and laid his hand tenderly upon his head.

"My son," said he, "dry thy tears and wash thy face, and take heart again. Thou hast sinned deeply, but thou art penitent. Therefore in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I say 'Thy sins are forgiven thee'."

The last words, spoken with intense earnestness and the hand laid in blessing on the head, seemed to bring conviction to the Japanese noble's mind, and as he raised his head, a look of peace and happiness was already dawning on his face.

"Father," said he, "how can I thank thee? Thou hast brought comfort where before reigned despair."

"Thank not me, O noble Anjiro," replied the missionary, "but pour forth thanksgiving to the God Who hath pardoned thee. And now I must speak further. If thou desirest to embrace this faith, thou must be prepared for Holy Baptism."

"I will do anything that thou tellest me," cried Anjiro, "only grant that I may stay with thee."

"That is the very thing thou wilt not be able to do ;

I must hurry on to other cities to tell the good tidings—to plant the seed ere the Master calls me hence, and leave to others the reaping. But thou—thou must be fed and watered—the seed must germinate; if thou wilt consent, I will leave thee here in good hands for a time, and come back again, and if I find that thou art still standing firm, then thou shalt be baptised.”

“But where wilt thou leave me?” said Anjiro, “I am an utter stranger in Goa.”

“There is a college here for Christian students,” replied Xavier, “supervised by the Bishop of Goa; thou must stay there for a while, and study all the doctrines of the Christian faith. I can see that thou art quick and intelligent and canst already speak Portuguese fairly; thou wilt also learn to read and write it. In the future thou mayest be of great use in expounding the Scriptures to others.”

“Oh, how I would long to do that!” sighed Anjiro, “especially to my own brethren.”

“Perhaps that may come some day,” said the Padre. “Would they be likely—think you—to embrace this faith, of Jesus Christ and Him crucified?”

“They are an imaginative race,” was the reply, “and the story of Calvary would touch their hearts and consciences as none other would. Would to God that thou couldst come and tell them about it!”

The Padre’s eyes flashed fire, too, as if an electric spark had united his heart and Anjiro’s in one burning desire. But he repressed his feelings and said calmly:—

“Who knows? Thou mayest be the means of telling them. As for me, I learn foreign tongues with diffi-

culty, and the language of Japan is difficult. Still God may open a way. Meantime I must do His work here."

"Tell me," urged Anjiro, "if I am not impertinent in asking the question, why hast thou come to a town like Goa, so full of Christians, where the Gospel, I am told, has long been established? Surely other places which have never heard of Christ must need your ministrations more."

"I came," said Father Xavier, "because of all hindrances to the conversion of the world, there is none so great as the Christianity of its professors. Here in Goa they need a trumpet tone to rouse them from their religious self-satisfaction. They have been revengeful, too, upon the poor natives, forcing them to be Christians by fire and sword, destroying their temples, and benefiting in a temporal way by the precious jewels and other merchandise which they have wrested from them. God's Kingdom can never be established by force. He gently leads souls by the working of His Holy Spirit, but never drives them.

"I had to warn my countrymen also against being too ambitious, in mixing themselves up in politics. They are a wonderful people; they have gained a firm footing on this Indian coast, and their trade is fast increasing, but I am fearful lest the love of accumulating wealth should cause them to forget to do justly and to love mercy, and walk humbly with their God. I hope that my mission may have done some good. Many souls, I believe, have been turned from a formal profession of religion to newness of life, and the poor

natives will be gently dealt with for the future, and guided tenderly into the Fold of the Good Shepherd."

Anjiro could not help gazing with admiration at the Padre, as he saw the blue eyes glow with enthusiasm, and his sweet impelling look. Oh! that he could gain but one hundredth part of his holy zeal!

"Father," he said at last, "I know that thou hast been engaged in this missionary work for many years, and hast gained permission from King John of Portugal to follow wherever thy countrymen have colonised, but didst thou always care for this kind of work? I have often had a longing to be good and help others, but hitherto the world and its attractions have seemed too strong for me. I wonder if thou hast ever felt the world pulling thee back?"

Once more the Padre came and put his hand tenderly on the young man's shoulder.

"Son," said he, "take heart, God will help thee to resist the world. And when He speaks listen to His Voice. When I was a young man studying in Paris, the world came with its attractions, and for a time I forgot the requirements of my sacred calling, and plunged into a vortex of pleasure. Then an angel came in the person of a lame student, uncouth and mean-looking. At first I ridiculed him, but he bore all with such meekness that I became ashamed. Then one day, when he saw me engrossed in pleasure, he asked me solemnly: 'What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' And the words set me thinking. They haunted me day and night; I went to ask this poor lame man what he meant, and it ended in my

sitting a humble disciple at his feet and learning from him the true way to take up my cross and follow Christ. And he, in his turn, told me how he had once been occupied with the pleasures of this world, and how he had found no true happiness in them. And so, dear Anjiro, perhaps I am the messenger this time, to lead you from the paths of false pleasure to that true joy which I and my friend, Ignatius Loyola, have found."

"But thou sayest that thou must perforce leave me?" said Anjiro, in a distressed tone.

"Only for a few months, then I will come back and be with thee for some time. Thou wouldst not keep me back from the poor natives of Paravas, who are longing to see me once more?"

"What of them?"

"They need the Gospel of Christ to console them, their plight is most wretched. Engaged in the pearl fisheries, they are oppressed by those who rule over them, while their food and their lodging are of the most miserable description. When I first visited them they seemed not to possess one single earthly comfort or visible blessing. I dwelt with them for some time, baptising many and telling them how the Son of God often went cold and hungry, and had no place where He could lay His head, and how He had gone to prepare a place in Heaven for them. I taught them also a few ways of making their hard lot a little easier in an earthly sense. Now I hear that there are many more waiting to become Christians. I must go and baptise them. The news of their im-

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF JAPAN 11

proved condition refreshes and inspires my soul. Thou wouldst not hinder me ? ”

“ Indeed, no,” said Anjiro, earnestly, “ but when shall I see thee again ? ”

“ To-morrow morning, then I will take thee to the Bishop of Goa, and leave thee under his care.”

CHAPTER II.

IT is a year later and the eve of the Feast of Pentecost, as Anjiro, the Japanese noble, hastens with joyful steps to the quayside of Goa. For the good Father is coming back from his long journey to-day, in time to present him as a candidate for Holy Baptism in the cathedral on the morrow.

What a gladsome Whitsuntide it is for him! He feels that he has received Divine forgiveness and pardon for the foul deed which was caused by his uncontrolled temper, that his sins have been washed away in the Blood of Christ, and that the gift of the Holy Spirit is really his! His whole being glowed at the thought. There was a beautiful look on Anjiro's face as he passed swiftly through the College gardens, with its stately trees, and gay with flowers. He was thinking of his wife and child, and of how they also might soon be made Christians. For only lately he had sent by the hands of a Portuguese captain, bound for Japan, a letter to his beloved Shoro, telling her how he had received a hint that the Japanese Government had condoned his crime, and would permit him to return, and how he was trying to persuade Father Xavier to accompany him on his voyage home; how

they hoped to land in due course at Kagoshima, and how she and darling baby Maia must be sure to be there to welcome them. He explained how he was longing to tell her more of this new religion, which seemed to drive away bad temper, and evil living, and every kind of wickedness, how she might look forward to a happier life with him than she had had formerly, how he hoped to make a new home for her in pleasanter surroundings at the port of Nagasaki, and how peace and contentment and true joy might be theirs.

Then in swift review, his mind glanced over the events of the past few months. How irksome at first had seemed the life in College. He had been amongst strangers and had had great difficulties not only in trying to understand the doctrines of the Christian faith, but in mastering the Portuguese language. He had missed the help of the good Father, whose very smile seemed to give him hope and encouragement. The Bishop was always kind and courteous, but he was too busy for Anjiro to go and pour out his troubles as he had done to the Padre. The Padre had promised to return in a few months' time, but the months seemed to drag like years to Anjiro. Yet he felt that he could not wish him back when he heard from those who traded at the port and brought the latest news of all the good that the Padre was doing: how he had found the poor people of those pearl fisheries in a terrible state, in consequence of having been attacked and plundered by neighbouring tribes, how they had been driven from their homes, and left to die of starvation, how he had got twenty boat-loads of provisions and

distributed them amidst the blessings of the people, and then, following the example of Him Who had fed the five thousand by the Lake of Galilee, he had ministered to their spiritual wants. He heard how all but three and a half hours out of the twenty-four he was waking and working, rising at dawn to call upon the people to worship the true God, then teaching the children, encouraging the new converts, consoling the dying, going far inland to other villages to preach the same good tidings, returning at twilight to call the people once more to worship and to dismiss them with his blessing. Months ago Anjiro had heard of all this, for often in his spare time he would saunter down to the sunny harbour, and have a chat with the captains who put in for provisions, and he would hear them relate with tear-dimmed eyes of the good Father, and how he was achieving success such as no other missionary had ever before obtained.

The news stirred him greatly and strengthened the desire which he had formed that Father Xavier should come to Japan. Then a new life would begin for his native land, and for its people. There would be many difficulties, doubtless, in the good Father's way. The language, how would he master its intricacies? He was not a good linguist, as Anjiro had found out, and the Japanese tongue was a very hard one for foreigners. Then a happy thought had struck him. He himself would study hard to master Portuguese that he might act as Father Xavier's interpreter. He would accompany him from one end of Japan to the other, and would explain clearly all that the Padre would have to



A CHRISTIAN JAPANESE AND HIS TWO SONS.

tell them. Thus one obstacle would be removed; so full of this idea, Anjiro had studied all these long months, night and day, sparing all the time he could from his collegiate tasks in translating into Japanese parts of the four Gospels. It would be a pleasant surprise to show them to the good Father on his return.

And now the longed-for hour had come. Already the vessel was making its way through the salt-water creeks; in another moment or two he would gaze once more upon his beloved teacher's face. The air blew sweet and fresh off the water, and Anjiro thought that he had never seen the island of Goa look more beautiful than it did on this evening, as the sun lighted up the white-roofed houses, and bathed in glory the cross which glistened like gold on the summit of the cathedral. The vessel swung round to the quayside; a minute later Father Xavier and Anjiro were grasping hands, and exchanging affectionate greetings. Anjiro fancied that the Padre had aged since he had last seen him, and that there was a look of delicacy on the features which before had been absent, but the eye had lost none of its power, and the magic of his personality affected him more strongly than ever.

"Father!" he exclaimed, "I have been thirsting for thy presence as a barren land for rain. I have missed thee sorely."

Father Xavier smiled.

"Thy letters were cheery enough, and pleased me greatly, for I could see that thou wast making great progress with my native tongue. I knew that thou wert in good hands, too, and that thou wouldst not wish

me to hurry back. Those poor souls in the pearl fisheries were in dire need of help."

"I knew that well, Father, but thou hast left them in better heart, I trust?"

"Yes; they will get on now and those plundering tribes will not disturb them again. They have had a lesson, and Government has undertaken to punish any fresh attempts severely, so that in temporal matters my poor friends are more comfortable. And as for spiritual matters, several friends of mine are on their way from Oporto, to carry on the work which I began, so that I need not return there for some years to come."

"I am thankful to hear that, more thankful than I can express," replied Anjiro, in a voice trembling with emotion.

There was deep meaning in his tone, and Father Xavier read his thoughts as he said quickly: "Tell me! where is it that thou wishest me to go?"

"To my native land, the land of the Rising Sun, but a land which is crippled because it lacks a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ which thou alone canst impart."

Father Xavier's eye gleamed with enthusiasm. He was a born evangelist, and loved to go from place to place, breaking up dry ground, when having sown the seed, he would leave the band of missionaries whom he always rallied round him to reap the in-gathering. And Japan seemed to open up a wonderful prospect of success, as he thought of Anjiro, and how quickly he had responded to the Gospel call. He was marvelously intelligent, and full of passionate energy and

holy fervour that his brethren might hear the "good news". He was a true missionary, and if only one-tenth of the noble class to which he belonged were like him, the conquest of Japan for Christ would soon be accomplished.

As for the poor people, they too, he had little doubt, would also welcome Christianity. Anjiro had told him how Buddhism was losing its power, and how the older form of religion (Shintoism) failed to satisfy the people, how the Emperor of Japan was but a puppet in a gilded cage, all power being in the hands of the military ruler, the Shogun, and how the people were heart-sick, and ready to receive a comforting religion such as he had to give. Much of this Father Xavier had learned through reading Anjiro's letters; now he saw that the time for definite action had come. At last he spoke. "I like the idea well, Anjiro, but there is one sad hindrance. I have no knowledge of the tongue."

"But I know thy language well, Father, and I will act as thy interpreter, if thou wilt have me. Oh, Father! this has been my dream day and night ever since thou hast left me. And in my spare time I have been helping to make the way easy for thee. I have translated into Japanese portions of each of the Gospels. Father, if thou wilt come back home with me I will follow thee from town to town, and village to village. I long that my relatives and friends, and all Japan, may feel as happy as I do."

The Father gazed with brimming eyes into the young man's eager face. Then he said: "Thou art a marvel, Anjiro, to have begun to translate after

such a short acquaintance with my language. I believe that God hath sent thee all this long way as a messenger to tell me of thy people's need. And with thee at my side, I will not fear the obstacles of thy tongue. But I must have some slight acquaintance with it before starting, and if thou wilt be my teacher, I will try and not be too stupid a pupil."

"Thanks! thanks! dear Father. We will begin at once," exclaimed Anjiro, in a voice of intense excitement. Then, as if remembering something, his face fell as he added, "I fear that we are not to set sail immediately."

Father Xavier laid his hand with kindly pressure within the young man's feverish palm as he replied :—

"Thou must have patience, dear Anjiro. I cannot learn even the rudiments of thy difficult language without a month or two's hard study. What I propose is that we should join rooms in College, give ourselves up entirely to the study of the Scriptures and the doctrines of the Christian faith. Thou shalt take down all I say in thine own tongue, and, in turn, thou must teach me to speak it. At the same time, thou must endeavour to tell me as much as possible about the character, habits, and temperament of thy countrymen. In this way we shall go out well prepared for the task."

"It sounds a delightful scheme, Father, but the delay in starting tries me sorely. I am longing to see my wife and little Maia. Could we not study a great deal on the voyage?"

"No doubt we shall be able to do something then, but there are many distractions, and if this idea of ours

is to be carried out successfully it will take months of preparation. I must write immediately to King John, and ask him if he will kindly aid us by paying the expenses of a number of teachers who must be sent out from Portugal to meet us on our arrival in Japan, for I gather, from what thou tellest me, that thy countrymen will not be slow to embrace the new Faith, and in that case we shall want many helpers."

"I feel that you are right, Father, in not hurrying off till all your plans are made; I know that thy arrival will be welcomed by all classes in my native land, and that a great in-gathering will be the result. And I must not be selfish, though I cannot help fretting at the delay, for I am longing to see my loved ones again. However, as they are being well looked after, I must be patient."

"That is good, my son. I feel it is God's will that we should remain here some little time longer. Now take me to the Bishop; I wish to hear about the arrangements that have been made for thy baptism to-morrow."

The next day the sun streamed gloriously through the painted windows of the cathedral on a little group gathered round the font, while, at a respectful distance, knelt a large and reverent congregation. It was the first time in the annals of the Church that a Japanese had been baptised, and the noble birth of the candidate lent additional interest to the ceremony.

Anjiro received the new name by which he wished from henceforth to be called—"Paul of the Holy Faith".

Very tenderly and lovingly did the Bishop receive

him, and when he came to the actual signing of the cross upon his brow, his voice trembled with emotion.

There was a prophetic ring in the good Bishop's voice, as if, looking down through the years to come, he could see something of the trial and persecution in store for this young soldier of the Cross. Then Father Xavier knelt down and engaged in prayer, with a fervour such as he had seldom before experienced, praying that, whatever happened, Anjiro might be kept firm.

Years after, some of those present recalled the look upon Anjiro's face, as, with the baptismal dew still wet upon his forehead, he turned his gaze where hung a life-size painting of the crucified Saviour. In that look he seemed to them to be gathering up strength to meet any trouble which the future might bring him.

As the sign of the Cross was traced upon his brow, and he felt that he was really made a Christian, Anjiro gradually lost all thoughts of the cathedral and its body of worshippers, and, as he told Father Xavier afterwards, he seemed to be lifted for the moment into a higher sphere.

"Father," said he, as they sat together in sweet converse that same evening in a shady nook of the College gardens, "when I looked towards that picture of the Crucifixion, the picture seemed to fade away, and I saw a wonderful sight as Heaven itself seemed to open, and Jesus to stand on the right hand of God. And He looked so kind, Father, that I felt that I could do anything or bear anything for Him."

Father Xavier had learned by this time something

of his young friend's nature, but his words moved him strangely.

"See, Paul!" he exclaimed abruptly. "The sun is setting; the chills of evening will soon be upon us. Let us go indoors."

Paul—as Anjiro was now to be called—rose obediently. He was half-ashamed at having wearied Father Xavier by telling him so much of his innermost thoughts, and he felt weary now that the excitement of this wonderful day was over.

Giving a little sigh of fatigue, he extended his arms, as if to seek temporary relief, and in so doing his shadow fell on the sunlit pathway, just where his teacher was sitting.

The figure had the form of a cross. A look, half sad, and half wondering passed over the Padre's features.

"That shadow! I have only seen it once before, and then it meant martyrdom," he mused. "Is it so now? I pray not. There is no likelihood, so far as I can see. They are a happy, kind-hearted people, and we come as friends, not enemies, and with no worldly motive. Yet one never knows. I must leave all in God's hands. But, if he is put to the test, I have no fear for him. I feel that he will be true, even unto death."

CHAPTER III.

CLAP! clap! clap! The little white hands beat feverishly together, accompanied by a sweet, shrill cry. It was the Japanese method of summoning any one, but the clapping to-day (August 15, 1549) had an excited sound, and brought baby Maia quickly into her mother's presence.

"There thou art, darling. Let me see if thou art quite neat. Father is coming home to-day! I can hardly believe it. I am so glad."

Baby Maia was only five years old, and did not understand her mother's enthusiasm, but she had heard much of that father, whom she could only dimly remember, for he had been away so long, and she felt glad, too; so, standing on tip-toe, she climbed up to her mother's knee and sought her mother's embrace.

Anjiro, or Paul Anjiro, as we must call him, had made a good choice in his wife Shoro. The clear skin and oval face; the winsome smile, small feet, and pretty, delicate hands were only outside charms, but, besides these, Shoro possessed the virtues of cheerfulness, contentment, a willingness to share whatever of pain or sorrow befell her husband, and a sense of duty, which made Paul Anjiro feel that he was one of the



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happiest of mortals. He felt, too, that these characteristics which were shared by many Japanese women, would go far towards making his native land, when it became Christian, one of the happiest regions on earth. Shoro had put on her best attire to-day to greet her husband. She looked charming, with her glossy hair piled on the top of her head, her small fans and combs peeping out between the coils, and her white silk crêpe dress dotted with rosebuds, and fastened with a green silk sash tied into a huge bow behind.

It would soon be time to be going down to the quay, but she must first look round the rooms to see that all was right for the expected travellers. For Father Xavier was coming also to stay with them for a time. Kagoshima was Anjiro's birthplace, and many old friends of his father's were still living there. They would be of use in helping him to make a fresh start, and it would be a good place for the commencement of Father Xavier's evangelistic work, for Anjiro would be able to introduce him to some of his old friends and comrades, and they, in turn, would tell others of this new Faith. Before long they themselves were to settle down in Nagasaki, though Paul told her that he might have to leave her for a time to accompany Father Xavier on his missionary journeys through the island. But he had said that he should often be back, and never away for a long time together, and his letters breathed such a kind, affectionate spirit that Shoro felt quite happy and full of hope.

She was glad that he was bringing back his two servants with him. She had missed their help sorely

during his long absence. How strange it would be to call them by their new names! For Paul had told her that they had been baptised. As for herself, she, too, perhaps, would soon be made a Christian. What a wonderful religion this must be to have made her husband such a different man! She longed to know more about it from his own lips. She stopped her day-dreams and gave a final look round. It was a pretty house which Shoro had chosen for their temporary residence. It was divided inside into two sets of apartments, one for herself and Maia, for in upper-class life, the Japanese women keep much to themselves, whilst on the other side were the reception rooms. These were separated one from the other by partitions of thick cardboard with a picture painted on each, set in a sliding wooden framework. Rice-straw mats, plaited with the utmost neatness, and beautifully clean, were laid down in all the rooms. In the bedrooms thick coverlets of silk were spread ready for the travellers to rest their limbs, and in the chief room was the brazier, polished and burning brightly, ready for the party to sit round and enjoy their tea. The lacquer trays, on which to serve the meal, were shining brightly with their extra rubbing. Yes, all was ready. And the garden, what about that? Shoro looked out. It was the hot month of August, and there was not an abundance of flowers as in July, but the blue agapanthus lily was still blooming profusely, and in the stream running through the garden, the lotus flowers were in their full beauty. The young wife ran down for a moment to the stream to look at her favourite flower,

which springing from the mud, develops a perfect bloom. So, thought Shoro, might her husband and she spring from a muddy and disturbed past into a beauteous life. She felt instinctively that this new religion of Jesus Christ had just come in time to help them to do it.

The garden looked very beautiful this evening, and any other time she would have been loth to leave it. For, though there were not many flowers now, the bamboo fences were covered with pretty creepers, the leaves of the shumac tree were tinged with scarlet, and the mauve-coloured arches twined round the miniature ponds, where the goldfish were merrily disporting themselves. In the background, overhanging the stream, where the lotus unfolded its gaze to the cloudless sky, were stately pines and oaks. But it was time to leave, for there would be full enjoyment of all this later, with her beloved husband at her side. She must now order the open-air litter to take Maia and herself to the quay. So the brightly-painted palanquin came round, carried by four men, with two swordsmen walking in front as was the custom with families of high rank. It was the daily task of the four bearers to act the part of horses, nor was it hard to carry such light burdens as their dainty mistress and little Maia. They, also, were eager to see the master of the house again. For Shoro had managed to retain a number of her old servants when removing to Kagoshima to await her husband's return.

The town looked peaceful and pretty that summer evening, as Shoro was carried swiftly through it, thinking of her husband's delight at once more being allowed to set foot in it again. It was not Kagoshima itself

which charmed her sense of the beautiful; for the houses, like all Japanese towns, with the terror of earthquakes ever present, were built with low-tiled roofs and willows and with paper walls. It was the scenery framing the whole which was so magnificent. Far as the eye could reach lay the sea—with islands rising out of its clear depths. Here and there a rugged rock would raise its head majestically, as if speaking a bold defiance to the elements, and again some beautiful islet would appear, with a stately temple in the centre, surrounded with green terraces, winding walks and shady groves. Shoro strained her eyes, as she saw in the distance a vessel approaching the harbour. It was some distance off yet; she was in plenty of time to meet her husband. What joy! Then she clapped her hands, and little Maia did the same.

Her carrier men took it as a signal for fresh effort on their part, and soon had the palanquin brought to the edge of the quay. A little later on, they had boarded the vessel, and husband and wife greeted each other while little Maia clung, half shy, half delighted, to her mother's skirts.

As soon as the first transports of joy had subsided, Paul turned and introduced Father Xavier, who had retired to a distance so as not to interfere with the sacredness of the family meeting. Shoro gave a little start of surprise when she saw the Padre who had done so much for her husband. Japanese ladies are the pattern of politeness, and never exhibit incivility to any one, but Shoro had some difficulty in concealing her disappointment at the sight of the meagre, shabby

figure of the Padre. She had heard much of this "Apostle of India," and had pictured him as a stately priest, like some of the great Buddhist Bonzes, richly robed, and with a dignified presence. She saw, instead, a shabby-looking, red-haired man, with nothing taking about him except his eyes, carrying a little bundle on his back, and with nothing else but a staff and a black, worn-looking book in his hand.

"Anjiro," she whispered, she had not yet learnt to call him Paul, when for a few minutes before leaving the ship they were together, "is this really Father Xavier? His appearance is not prepossessing. Will he ever do any good in our country, which likes to have everything handsome and bright and beautiful?"

Paul replied :—

"Wait till you hear him preach. I tell you that he will take Japan by storm. He is tired and weary now. When he is washed and refreshed, you will be attracted by his sweet face, as every one else has been. He has made many friends already among some of our countrymen who were on board. We have had a fearful voyage, the monsoon has been raging, and, at one point, we thought that we should have gone to the bottom. But in the time of greatest danger the Father was cool and calm, and ever ready to lend a hand to save the ship, and when he was not wanted on deck he would gather us in the cabin and lead us in prayer and praise. He kept heart in passengers and crew when all hope seemed to have vanished. When sickness broke out amongst us, it was the Padre who nursed the fever patients day and night, and who gave up his own

food that some of the poor might have enough. Oh, Shoro! I cannot tell you all that he has done. If it had not been for him, I should never have been here alive, for I, too, had fever badly and was delirious at times."

"Say no more, I shall always love him for bringing you back safely to me. But see, Maia is longing to start home, and waiting to make better friends with you, so we must go. Supper will be spoiling, and I am sure both you and the good Father must be quite ready for it."

It was a happy party which gathered for the evening meal. On the charcoal fire-box in the middle of the room the welcome tea-kettle was boiling. Gay cushions had been placed round, and rice, broiled fish, and cooked vegetables had been prepared. Lacquer trays with dainty cups full of fragrant tea, made as only the Japanese can make it, were offered to the travellers.

In every Japanese house, there is in one of the rooms a recess, called the *toko-no-ma*, which is raised a few inches above the floor. In this recess generally hangs a picture, and below it a vase containing an arrangement of flowers or branches of a tree. The pictures and flowers are changed according to the season of the year. When a guest arrives, a cushion is always placed beside the master's cushion in front of the *toko-no-ma* with an invitation to be seated; so Father Xavier was conducted after supper to this post of honour. Here he had his first talk with Shoro about the Christian religion. He had made some progress in the Japanese language during the long voyage, and



EATING RICE.

was able to hold converse with Shoro, her husband being at hand to interpret when any difficulty occurred. The good Father's eye rested tenderly on the young wife, as he noted how eagerly she drank in the "good news". He told her that in a few months' time she would probably be ready for Holy Baptism. It was August now; on Christmas Day she might look forward to being made a Christian. What name would she like to take? Shoro glanced at her husband. She had just been hearing the wondrous story—wondrous even as told in Father Xavier's broken Japanese—of the Manger at Bethlehem, of the sweet Virgin Mother, and the Christ-Child born in those lowly surroundings, and read approval in his face as she replied :—

"I should like to be called Mary."

Father Xavier then gave her some slight preparatory instruction, while Paul wandered away to have a romp with little Maia. When she had been despatched tired and happy to bed, he enjoyed a reverie over *hibachi* in his own snugger, and a cup of the favourite Japanese drink, answering to the old English beverage of mead. The *hibachi*s, or fire-boxes, were a necessary piece of furniture in every room—being bowls, or boxes, made of metal, wood, china, or pottery, and varying from ten to twenty inches in diameter. Shoro had seen that the *hibachi* in her husband's sanctum was well filled with charcoal ashes, the top being covered with pieces of loose charcoal. A tripod of metal was set over it and a kettle was singing gaily.

Paul was glad to enjoy again his old habits and

customs ; and here, sitting on his heels in true Japanese fashion, Father Xavier found him.

"Thank you, friend," said he, smiling, as Paul invited him to a cushion and handed him a cup of his beverage, "the hour is late, and I have much work to do yet, and much to talk over with thee, and this drink is refreshing. I am rejoiced to see how happy thou art in thy household. Thou hast a treasure in thy wife. She is a true, good woman, and will shine as a jewel some day in the Saviour's crown. Thou wast right in urging me to come here. Thy wife has been telling me how all classes will be ready to hear the 'good news'. But there is no time to be lost. Two workers, Father Frois and Juan Fernandez, have already arrived. They will be here to-morrow to meet and consult with thee and me. Then we must go in a body to the Governor of Satsuma and gain permission to teach and preach in the district. Thou thinkest that he will give ready assent?"

"I know that he will," said Paul, "for he is friendly disposed and sick of the tyranny at headquarters. The Shogun oppresses all the governors, and they dare not appeal to the Mikado for their rights. It would be worse than useless, and they would probably lose their heads into the bargain. No, I am sure that the Governor of Satsuma will welcome us. There is only one set of people besides the Shogun to fear."

"What of them?"

"The Bonzes," replied Paul, lowering his voice to a whisper, "we must be careful not to offend them. They are jealous of their rights, and many of them

are cruel and vindictive. Others, again, are sweet-tempered and pliable, and we may even gain some over to our side, and perhaps turn the Buddhist temples where they preside, into places for Christian worship. But we must feel our way cautiously; one false step might ruin our cause. And thou must make it very plain to the Governor of Satsuma that thou hast no other desire than to prepare the people for a world to come, and to make them good, law-abiding people while on earth. If the Shogun thought that King John of Portugal had any idea of conquering this country, and had sent you and your brother missionaries to pave the way, woe betide us all! Our lives, even those of my beloved Shoro and little Maia, would not be worth an hour's purchase."

"Thou knowest well that we have no such designs," replied Father Xavier. "I came at thy invitation, and King John did but supply men and means to help my evangelistic labours. Have no fear, Paul. We will soon show them that we have but one object—to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

CHAPTER IV.

IT was once again the end of August, in the year 1551, when the same party which had had such a happy reunion at Kagoshima, were assembled in Paul Anjiro's house, at the busy port of Nagasaki. This was one of the places where facilities had been given for the introduction of Christianity which had been diligently spread over the southern part of the mainland. With much cause for thanksgiving, there was, however, a feeling of sorrow to-day, for Father Xavier had come to say "Good-bye" to his friends. It was hard to part with him, but both Paul and Mary felt that they could not hold him back, and even little Maia, who had learned to love her godfather next best to her own parents, knew that she must not utter a word of regret. Only the dark eyes filled with tears as she held tightly to his hand, but with the spirit of obedience which is early inculcated in all the daughters of Japan, she put a firm control on her feelings, and tried to look cheerful.

Why was Father Xavier going away? It was only two years since he had landed in Japan, a country which, till then, had scarcely heard of the Christian religion. Surely there was still much work here for him to do. But that was not the good Father's

method. As in Goa, and on the uncivilised coasts of the pearl fisheries, he had sown the seed, and organised a band of helpers, so now he must leave the reaping to others. China was calling across the sea, "Come over and help us". News of the joy that Christ's name had brought to Japan had travelled to that vast empire, and merchants and traders who thronged the ports of Nagasaki in the south, Yedo in the centre, and Hakodate in the north, brought urgent requests that the good Father would not delay his visit.

And Father Xavier, anxious to respond to the call, considered that Japan might be safely left. Kosmè de Torres would be left by him in charge and he had a band of vigorous missionaries from Spain and Portugal, as well as Japanese converts, all willing to follow their leaders. Paul Anjiro alone was a tower of strength. During the last three years he had travelled up and down the country, interpreting Father Xavier's words to vast assemblies of people. Great success had attended their efforts. They had arrived at a time when the country was ripe for such a mission, and when the people were longing for a hope beyond this life. Some of the Daimios who were the feudal lords of Japan, had received the missionaries graciously, and their position and wealth had helped forward the spread of the Gospel. Money had been freely given by them for building churches and to provide other necessary expenses. The peasants had followed in their turn, and conversions to the Christian faith could be counted by thousands. And all had been done in the space of three years!

But one thing troubled Father Xavier, and made him loth to leave. There was no Bishop or head to whom to appeal. The success had been so rapid that no Bishop had as yet been sent out. At present all was going well, but should any unworthy missionary appear upon the scene, or should traders make an excuse of Christianity for trying to secure their own advantage in Japan, then matters might take a very undesirable turn. Still, he must hope for the best and he was leaving the work in good hands. He told Paul to keep watch and to report immediately to him in China should he see anything to occasion disquietude, but Paul had laughed at the idea of such a thing. There was no danger he said, for the Daimios were ready to welcome the Portuguese and other nations to their shores, and commerce was rapidly improving since the Christian religion had been introduced. The whole Japanese population was sick of the tyranny of the Shogun, the real ruler, who kept the Emperor in a gilded palace as a mere figure-head. The new religion of "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," was being well carried out by the Daimios, and the peasants had never been so kindly treated, or so happy. In course of time even the hard-hearted Shogun might become a disciple of Jesus Christ, the Mikado would be sure to follow his example and Japan would then be the happiest place in the world! The Buddhist priests, no doubt, were a little jealous, but they could not contend against overwhelming numbers.

Paul's joyous outlook cheered Father Xavier as they talked together for hours just before his departure.

He was glad to think that his fears were probably groundless. He felt that his work on earth was nearly ended, but he had a burning desire to go to China, to plant the faith of Jesus Christ. If that were accomplished, he could die happy. The blue eyes had a look not of this world, thought Mary Anjiro, as with a woman's instinct, she took note of the trembling hands and the worn, nervous face. She felt that perhaps the conversion of Japan had cost the good Father his life. What had he not done in those three years? It had been a fearful strain, and would have tried the strongest constitution. Yet he had been always bright and cheerful. He had often travelled barefoot, carrying the few simple possessions which belonged to him on his back, his only luggage being a mat to sleep on, and a bag containing the sacred vessels with which to administer the Holy Communion. And still the tired frame did not think of rest. She knew, however, that he was worn out but could do nothing but pray for him.

Going to the window Mary looked out. It was a beautiful scene on which she gazed. The port of Nagasaki is built in the form of an amphitheatre, towards the east were beautiful houses, standing upon land which had been reclaimed from the sea at great labour. At the top of the highest hill, stood a splendid Buddhist temple. Mary trembled as she looked at it, and a feeling of coming woe swept over her. She told herself that she was getting fanciful, and that there was nothing to fear from the Bonze who superintended its ceremonials. He was always suave and agreeable

whenever he met Paul and herself, and with Father Xavier he had had frequent discussions, conducted in the most friendly manner about the Christian Faith. Yet she mistrusted him. Once or twice she had caught a gleam in those dark eyes which had sent a thrill of horror to her soul. But what could the Bonze do to harm them? Nagasaki was becoming a stronghold of Christianity, which was favoured by the most powerful lords and nobles in the land. In a few years the Bonze would have to shut up his Buddhist temple. The Portuguese and Spanish merchants were thronging the port, and they were all well-disposed towards Christianity. Mary was too unworldly to see that many of these professed religion merely to gain their own ends. Once again she looked out at the fair scene. Their own garden was beautiful, with its plums, peaches and pears; the graceful camphor and vegetable wax-tree were also growing in profusion. Their rice fields lying in the distance were doing well, and the silkworm industry had prospered. While Paul had been away on his missionary journeys she and the servants had looked well after his estate, and as the port was near at hand, trading had been successfully carried on with foreign firms. And Paul himself was so kind and affectionate. His old hot temper never showed itself now, for the Grace of God had accomplished wonders, both in his and her heart. And then they had little Mariya to love and care for—oh! how good God had been to them!

The child came running up as she stood there at the window.

"Mother," she cried, "father has just told me that he is going to take us out to Pappenberg on my birthday to have tea there, won't it be lovely? And may we not have some *castira*?" (Castira was another name for a sweetmeat, a delightful sweetmeat unknown to the Japanese till the advent of the missionaries, and so-called because it was made originally in Castile, in Spain.)

"Yes, father and I have planned this birthday treat for you, and the air out there will be refreshing, now that the rest of the country is dried up this hot weather. You shall have your blue *kimono* (frock) on, and your dolls and their tea-set, and I have asked your little friends from Deshima (a neighbouring suburb) to come too."

The Pappenberg rock was a beautiful island in the centre of the sea just outside Nagasaki, and was a great pleasure-resort. Children loved to play up and down its shingled shore, or clamber up its slopes to pick the beautiful wild flowers which grew there. Then the older people would sit in groups, enjoying the wide expanse of scenery, watching the youngsters and their gambols, and talking over the days when they were also young and scampered about in wild spirits.

Little Maia clapped her hands with delight when she heard, and for a time the sorrow of Father Xavier's approaching departure was forgotten.

The next day Father Xavier went away. They took leave of him, as in the case of St. Paul of old, sorrowing most of all that they should see his face no more. Mary was glad that little Maia's birthday

was near at hand as a diversion from melancholy thoughts.

It was a lovely day when they rowed out to the island of Pappenberg. The little guests were attired in pretty silken robes, their hair dressed in full gala-style with fans and ornamental combs, and Mariya danced with delight as soon as they landed. She and her little friends were soon helping the servants to lay the tea, spreading a feast at the same time for the beloved dolls with their special porcelain equipage. Tea-making, and the pleasant, agreeable manners pertaining to it, has from the earliest times been regarded as an art in Japan, and children are taught how to serve it in company. So little Maia, early trained as the child of a noble house, dispensed the fragrant cup with charming ceremony. Then, when all were helped, she took her *samisen* (Japanese guitar), and struck up a quaint, lively tune. The music floated out on the water. Paul, sitting Japanese fashion on his heels, and drinking his tea, gazed admiringly at his little daughter. He looked radiantly happy, and, seeing him thus, his wife forgot all her forebodings and fears, and whispered:—

“Oh, Paul, this is really a gala-day for us, too—is it not? There seems not a cloud in our sky of happiness.”

Paul turned a grateful look on his wife, and said: “This holiday is very sweet, and I am enjoying it to the full, because it must be so brief. I did not like to tell thee before, dearest, but to-morrow I must leave thee again for a short space.”



THE TEA CEREMONY.

"To-morrow? So soon?"

"Yes. The good Father has entrusted me with important sealed documents relating to the future management of the Church, and I am to go to Kioto at once to deliver them safely into the hands of Father Frois. We are left now without a leader, and I may have to stay at Kioto a short time to help Father Frois. He is a good man, but for the next few years it will be a somewhat anxious time. He is young for the work."

"I only trust all will go well, and that those Bonzes will make no trouble at headquarters."

"I hope not; but, dearest, I know thou feelest like myself, that this preaching of the Faith of Jesus Christ and Him crucified has become part of our very life. And, if tribulation should come, He will comfort us. We can bear all for the Lord Jesus—can we not?"

"Yes, indeed, Paul. I feel He is all in all to both of us, and that we can never give Him up."

"We may be tried," said Paul, thoughtfully; "persecution may come. The Shogun is very civil and well-disposed to the new religion at present, but it may not always be so. But, Mary, my own, I will answer for thee standing firm?"

"Thou mayest count on me, Paul," she said, and the dark eyes looked into his with a loving yet firm gaze.

"Thou wouldst not hold me back, even if it cost me my life to confess Christ openly?"

"Nay—I would die along with thee. But talk not so, dearest, thou dost make me melancholy. Thou wast so cheerful when the 'good Father' was here.

Hast thou heard anything since to make thee uneasy?" Mary trembled, and put her arm caressingly within that of her husband.

"No. Only sometimes one sees, as in a vision, troubles ahead. As we rowed out from the port to-day, I saw two Bonzes land, and go up to the temple on the hill. I cared not for the looks they threw at me. I was preaching in their town a few weeks ago, and we made many converts."

"Where were they going?"

"To the temple on the top of the hill, but the Bonze there, methinks, will not listen to any slander against me. He has always seemed friendly with the 'good Father' and myself."

Mary thought of the gleam she had seen once in his dark eyes, and kept silence. At last she said:—

"See, the sun is getting low in the sky; it is time to call the little ones together, and be getting back home. It has been a very happy day, Paul, such a powerful time. I wonder when we shall come here again."

Paul heard her last words, but did not reply.

CHAPTER V.

THE SIEGE OF OMURA.¹

IT was a wild November night in the year 1574, twenty-three years after Xavier sailed from Japan. The sentinels posted on the walls of Omura watched in the distance the fires of the great army which had come up to besiege the castle. The castle itself stood on the summit of a steep rock overlooking the Bay of Omura, and quite unapproachable except on one side where a narrow path led between high cliffs. The King of Omura was a Christian, and partly in consequence of his abandonment of his former religion an insurrection of his subjects had occurred, and he had been compelled to beat a hasty retreat into this castle where, as it seemed, he was in imminent danger of being captured and killed. Standing beside the King on the wall was a European priest, Luis de Frois by name, who was aged about fifty, but looked much older, and as the King gazed out upon the plain below, the priest said to him: "It is a singular honour that God has bestowed upon your Majesty in calling you to

¹ This story occurs at length in Crasset's *Histoire de l'Eglise du Japon*, and another abbreviated edition is given in Dr. Neale's *Lent Legends*, published by the S.P.C.K.

be the first King in Japan. I am in no way surprised at this rebellion, but be sure of this that God will not forget His own. He will either grant you conquest here for the truth's sake, or will grant to you a martyr's crown."

"I thank you, good Father," replied the King, "but victory here I do not expect, for what can twelve gentlemen and forty soldiers do against twenty thousand, for this I hear is the number of our foes. Nevertheless I will not lightly despair, for if this castle be taken by the heathen, the spread of the Faith will be greatly hindered."

Suddenly a messenger appeared who threw himself on the ground in front of the King. At the hazard of his life he had brought tidings concerning the movements of the enemy without.

"Are your tidings good or bad?" said the King to the messenger.

"Bad," replied the messenger. "Isafay, the rebel leader, will advance to-morrow with all his forces to attack the castle, and he has received a promise from the King of Firando that he will sail with sixty ships at the break of day to support his attack. Were it not that the news of this promise has spread, many of the inhabitants of Omura would fight on behalf of your Majesty, but as it is they are afraid to act."

"I shall hold the fort till the very end," replied the King. "If the people in the town are willing to fight on our behalf let them give us a sign. Let them fly a red flag from the house of Ximadono."

"It shall be done," said the messenger, "and if the

fleet from Firando should fail to appear I doubt not that they will fight." When the messenger had departed the King and the priest entered the hall of the castle. As they did so the Queen came forward and said : "My lord, my ladies and I share your protection, and it is but right that we should share your danger. We are fifty in number. If you will give to each of us a soldier's pike and cloak, we will take our place upon the walls and the enemy will take us for soldiers, and imagine that your force is double as great as it really is."

As the day dawned fifty new sentinels, in their soldier cloaks and bearing every one a pike, were visible from afar as they paced backwards and forwards on the walls. As the hour for storming the castle drew near, sixty ships were seen approaching, driven by the north-west wind. It was decided to send two thousand chosen men to storm the castle as the approach to it was so narrow that it was impossible for a larger number to act.

"I could have sworn," said one of Isafay's generals, as he gazed up at the castle, "that there were not as many soldiers within it as I see now upon its walls."

Between the plain and the castle wall there were four zig-zags. At the top of the second one the defenders had piled heaps of stones to hurl upon the rebels as they advanced. At the top of the fourth zig-zag they had made loopholes for their muskets, and piled up everything heavy which the castle contained. Father Frois addressed the defenders, and reminded them that although they might fall in fight

they were none the less martyrs, as they were really fighting in defence of the Christian Faith."

"Why does not God give us a sign," said one of the heathen defenders, "if indeed He be willing to help."

"We have no right to demand a sign," said Father Frois, but even as the words were on his lips a gust of wind struck the wall of the hall, where they were assembled, from the opposite direction from which it had been previously blowing. "He has given us a sign," said the Father, "the wind has changed and the fleet from Firando cannot enter our Bay to attack us."

Suddenly the shouts of the advancing host were heard, and all rushed out to take part in the fight which was beginning. Many of the foe were killed by the stones which were rolled down, but their companions pressed on, and ere long had reached the very gate of the castle. As long as the ammunition lasted the enemy were prevented from making their final assault, but the issue of the fight seemed to be already decided. "I fear, good Father," said the King, "that the end has come, the ammunition is well-nigh exhausted and we cannot hope to resist any longer when it is finished."

"Nay," said the priest, "but God Himself has succoured you, see, the red flag is waving in the city below."

Scarcely had the words passed his lips when a cry arose at the rear of the attacking force. As they saw a force issuing from the town, and about to attack them from behind, they waited not to count the number of their new assailants, but rushed down the

steep ascent trampling each other down in their un-reasoning panic. Then a storm which had been threatening for the last hour broke, and as the thunder pealed and the lightning flashed, the King with his tiny force issued from the castle, and joining hands with his friends from the town pursued the rebels as they fled in ever-increasing confusion. When the sun set there was not a rebel within many miles of Omura, and a large part of the fleet from Firando had been driven on to its own rocks.

CHAPTER VI.

IT was the "blossoming" month in Japan; in other words the month of May, when all who could left their homes, and spent a holiday in the country. Even the poorest peasant seemed to rouse at this bright season of the year, and for miles outside the suburbs of large towns the roads were thronged with people, many families, if not able to do more, joining in a basket of provisions, and setting forth to spend at least one day in the woods. Cripples and lepers were hastening to the hot sulphur springs with which Japan abounds, to seek relief from their ills. For these hot springs—existing from prehistoric times—are still pronounced by doctors to equal any in the world as a remedy for rheumatism and skin complaints, and the sulphur contained in them is largely used in the manufacture of matches—one of the most important of Japanese trades.

In the busy port of Nagasaki preparations of an extensive nature were being made to celebrate the 5th of May, the great festival held in honour of boys.

Every house which boasts a son is happy then, and



GRINDING UNHULLED RICE.

takes pains to announce it to the outside world by means of long strings fastened to the roof with paper fish flying from them. The fish are hollow, and as the wind inflates them they seem to be unceasingly endeavouring to climb up to the top of the string. They are regarded as an object-lesson to Japanese boys that they must "try, try again" if they wish to succeed in life. This festival is of very ancient date, and so in the year 1587, Nagasaki people as usual had laid themselves out to keep it with due honour. The streets were decorated with rice straw garlands and bits of coloured paper, the toy shops had put out their most tempting wares; the fairs, with their wrestlers and jugglers, were in full swing; and in the evening the town was to be lighted up with hundreds of fairy lanterns, and there was to be a sensational play at the theatre. Overlooking the stately Buddhist temple at the top of the hill the acacia tree was flourishing, just as it had done five-and-twenty years before, when Mary Anjiro had gazed at it. Bonze Bengu, who had always presided there, had come to look older, but in addition his face now wore a permanent malicious expression. He was an embittered man.

Ever since daybreak the big bell had been booming out, but only a few devotees responded to the call to worship. In the great square hall of the temple was a large open space, containing stalls full of images and charms, the sale of which in former times had formed a valuable asset to the funds of the monastery. But that was all changed now. Little by little Nagasaki had practically become a Christian city, and

very little gain from this source would come to the Bonzes to-day.

Behind a low open screen he chanted a service assisted by two young priests, but there was no dense crowd of pilgrims as in former days, and his face grew darker as he took note of the rows of empty mats. He was getting old, Buddhism was dying, and Christianity was raising its head in triumph. The thought of what the last five-and-twenty years had accomplished for the Christians roused his proud spirit. He had been told only that day that there were no less than 200,000 of them in the island. And they had a powerful backing. The Prince of Omura, the ruler of the district, had become one of the most enthusiastic and devoted disciples of this new Creed, and had withstood with the firmest opposition any interference with his religion.

The Prince had held out against overwhelming numbers sent by the Shogun, and that by a trick! But they would have their revenge some day. For years he had been watching to report to the Dictator, Hideyoshi (who now ruled as Shogun), that the Prince and Anjiro were nothing but political agitators, working hand-and-glove with the Portuguese to overthrow the Mikado and his ministers, but Hideyoshi had always said: "Bring me your proofs, then I can act". Well, he would try and get proofs this very festival week; he would disguise himself as a countryman, and mingle with the peasants in the market and fairs, listen to their conversation when they had had a little too much saké and find out what mischief was being hatched.

there in large numbers. Bonze Bengu had some cause for complaint as Paul Anjiro could not but admit.

There had been long and earnest consultation with Father Frois and other leaders who desired that a Bishop should be asked for from home to guide affairs, and give good advice to the Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch settlers that they must render due submission to the Shogun's demands, despotic though they might be, and remember that they were only visitors in the land, not lords of the soil. To their great delight, no sooner had the request been sent across the sea than a Bishop had been appointed.

But the missionaries' joy was short-lived. The Bishop, when he arrived, was a dark-looking ascetic and was worse than no Bishop at all. Ignorant of the real state of the country, and rejecting scornfully all good advice from Father Frois and his band, he ruled every one with a high hand, and accentuated more than ever the movement against Buddhism. What was even more regrettable, he had gathered a number of the younger members of the Christian community around him, and was encouraging them to persecute the idolaters. Already there were rumours of their breaking into Buddhist temples, turning out the Bonzes, and smashing their images and hallowed relics. Such zeal without discretion was lamentable. Where would it all end? Right-minded Christians could only pray that peace and quietness might yet be theirs; that the Bishop would see his mistake, and see it before any more mischief was done. But it was an

restless rebellious spirit against authority was growing, and the true Christians often longed for a Bishop who would punish offenders and dispense ecclesiastical justice with an impartial hand. Never was this more longed for than on this 5th of May, 1587, when Nagasaki outwardly looked its gayest and happiest. For never had trade been so brisk ; never had money been so plentiful.

Paul and his family were popular not only in Nagasaki, but wherever they went. Father Frois and his band of Christian missionaries, too, were well received, for they had charmed this light-hearted graceful people by their modest, holy, good lives ; by tending them when sick, by relieving them when in want, and by their solemn religious services, which appealed to the Japanese emotions. All this time, when good Queen Bess was reigning in England, admission into Japan was free to every nation, every port was open, and the governors of the various provinces vied with each other in offering hospitality to foreigners, each prince striving to induce the visitors to enter his port rather than that of his neighbour.

The Prince of Omura was a true follower of Christ, and it was his earnest and consistent life which in a great measure had Christianised Nagasaki. But circumstances over which he had no control were tending to put him in a wrong light with the Government.

The King of Portugal, casting his eyes over the world, and seeing how much Xavier's followers were welcomed in Japan—a country so rich in minerals and other products—encouraged the Portuguese to settle

there in large numbers. Bonze Bengu had some cause for complaint as Paul Anjiro could not but admit.

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anxious time, and none felt it more this festival week than Paul Anjiro and his relatives.

Maia his daughter was happily married and settled near them. Paul felt his cup of joy was full. His son-in-law, Goto, was all that could be desired and was kind and good to Maia and full of tender reverence for her mother. Should it please God to remove him at any time, he knew that Goto would prove a true son to Mary, and that she could always make her home with them. Not that he wanted to die just yet, he was only a little over sixty, but life was uncertain, and it was well to have plans made. And sometimes a feeling would come over him; he had felt it the day he was baptised, and once again at the time Father Xavier had left them; the hour might come when his faith would be put to the severest test, when he would have to confess Christ at the cost of his life.

Was it a warning—he wondered—that still small voice within him that he was hearing all this festival week? This week so gay—so bright. Goto and Maia had decked their house with paper fish of every size and shape in honour of his little grandson Paul; the streets were thronged with bright-eyed pleasure seekers; bands of musicians were giving out charming strains of melody; the play at the theatre was one of the finest he had ever seen. Mary had kept open house, and there had been delightful meetings with old friends; yet, above all, he seemed ever to be hearing this sentence, "To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise". He felt strangely happy as he



THE BOYS' FESTIVAL.

heard it; he had woke up at midnight repeating it aloud, but he had listened to it also above the jangle and noise at the docks, in the crowded street, on the mountain top, and in the quiet rice fields. He felt now that he had a dim idea of how happy the thief on the cross must have been when he heard the Lord Jesus say those words. Like him, he had been a great sinner, that sad past of his, and the awful moment of uncontrolled temper, when he had taken another's life, had left an indelible scar.

True, his sins had been repented of; yet the memory remained. But the Blood of Christ had cleansed him, and he was willing and ready to suffer, if needs be, any death for his Master's sake.

He was sitting in the Sibaia (Theatre) surrounded by his family and friends when these thoughts came to him. The play, a piece of romance and burlesque, introducing wrestling and juggling and much dancing and laughter, was unnoticed by him. Instead of the crowded house of gaily dressed people, and the music and merriment, he seemed only to see the figure of his crucified Saviour from whose lips he seemed to hear the words, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". A light touch on his arm woke him from his reverie, and then he saw Mary's sweet face as in a dream.

"Thou art tired, dearest," she said, "but it is over now. Maia and Goto have enjoyed it greatly, and it is not often we all have a little holiday together, but

it is almost the end of the festival week, and then to work again."

"Yes, then to work again," echoed Paul, as handing each of the party a lighted paper lantern, he led the way homewards through the dark streets.

CHAPTER VII.

HIDEYOSHI, who had become Shogun in all but name was reclining on silken cushions in his magnificent castle at Osaka. His countenance bore traces of fatigue, and his thoughts appeared to be moody and troublesome.

Toda-Minbo, his secretary, sitting beside him, watched him with anxious eyes. His lord's temper of late had been very uncertain and he seemed to have something on his mind. Yet every political worry that could be dealt with outside had been kept from him. Of recreation he had had his full share. They had only now returned from the theatre, where some of the best actors of the day had been keeping them entertained for hours. All the surroundings of the castle were of the pleasantest description. Not far from the fortress rolled the river from which water was obtained for the beautiful castle garden.

In this "blossoming month" it was a bower of beauty. Purple and white wisteria climbed over rugged walls, while sprays of pink almond flowers flung out their branches on the terraces in luxuriant profusion. Tall, well-kept bushes of the tea-plant, growing three feet high, and shrubs loaded with camelia-like blossoms vied with pomegranate and nectarine trees in forming

"Yes; let him in—and then leave us alone," said Hideyoshi.

Bonze Bengu's dark face wore a malicious smile of revengeful joy as he came bowing and scraping into the great man's presence. For, as before noted, the Mikado was but a puppet in the hands of his chief minister; it was Hideyoshi at this moment who ruled the whole of Japan.

"What news?" he exclaimed, impatiently, as at first, from sheer nervousness, the Bonze did not speak.

"Bad news, your Highness, and yet good, for I have found out what so long we wished to verify—that these Christians are really political spies in the pay of the King of Portugal. Thou knowest how lately Nagasaki has become a Christian city. We have tried to shut our eyes to it, but the Daimios have been making excellent bargains with Portuguese and Spanish traders. They are throwing off all authority, and insulting your ministers of State and our devoted Buddhist priests in the most unscrupulous manner. And the Christian 'Fathers' are encouraging the rebellion in every possible way, aided by some of our most aristocratic families. Last week, being the Feast of Boys, I disguised myself as a countryman, and mixed freely with the peasants. Many of them were inflamed with saké, and became incautious in their talk. It was all of open rebellion against the present taxation. Then I had some good silk to sell, and did a little trading with a Portuguese merchant. He had just come from the house of that accursed follower of the missionaries (Paul Anjiro, as he is now called), and

I drew him out. I pretended that I was poor and oppressed. He took me to an eating-house to prolong our talk, and then he said: 'Don't fret, all will yet be well, the Portuguese will come in and possess the land, the Buddhist priests must be demolished; they it is who play into the hands of the Japanese rulers. The Christians are helping us well—in fact, Christianity is only another word for conquest.' Then he went on to say: 'The King of Portugal is settling people on your land every day, the feudal system will be no more, and all of you will lead happy and prosperous lives. Only have patience. A year or two more, and you will see great changes in the administration of Government affairs, and a new system of rule.'"

"Thou art a splendid spy thyself," said Hideyoshi, approvingly. "All this news is of the greatest importance. But where did this Portuguese trader pick up all this knowledge?"

"I doubt not, your Highness, but that the Prince of Omura, is the real instigator of the plot, though we cannot bring it home to him. But there is one ring-leader we can speedily bring to justice, and that is—the accursed scoundrel—Anjiro. I find this Portuguese merchant has been staying at his house, and no doubt Anjiro is glad to play the part of arch-plotter. For he is burning with revenge. He has never forgiven the Government sending him into exile years ago for murdering his comrade. He is a murderer still, and would kill your Highness, and the Emperor, and every one of us to-morrow, if he had the chance."

"We will not give him the chance," said Hideyoshi,

with a stern smile. "But the question now that confronts us is—how to get possession of him. Canst thou give me any idea how it is to be done?"

"Only by your Highness issuing an edict affecting all Christians, for strong measures will have to be taken with regard to thousands of this accursed sect if the conspiracy is to be stamped out. If I may venture to say it, the only mistake that the Government has made was in allowing these foreign missionaries ever to set foot in this island."

"We thought that they would help us," replied Hideyoshi; "we hoped that they would open out fresh avenues of commerce, and that by our establishing friendly relations between Spain and Portugal their sailors would be of use in helping us to form a navy, and not only a navy but also a strong army. For our Samurais may be good fighting men, but they are sadly undisciplined, and only use swords, whereas this new weapon of warfare, gunpowder, is easily handled by our visitors, and we ought to be able to use it readily also. But I did not think that Spain and Portugal had so much greed and ambition. Still, it is a great matter to be warned in time. Thou shalt be richly rewarded, Bonze Bengu, for thy well-timed discovery. But now we must think carefully how the rebellion is to be put down. Let me have thy thoughts."

The Bonze's dark eyes gleamed with pleasure at these words of approbation; then he said:—

"It can only be done, your Highness, by rigidly stamping out Christianity, and restoring Buddhism to

its ancient position in the land. If thou wilt issue an edict ordering all these foreign missionaries to cease preaching and teaching under pain of death, and instantly to quit the country, then there may be a chance of restoring proper order. And those of our own people who have embraced Christianity should be made publicly to recant their errors, and be severely punished if they do not repent and return to the old Faith."

"Thy advice is good, and I agree with it almost entirely. Thy news came not altogether as a surprise. I have heard unpleasant rumours already about the Prince of Omura, and had almost decided to depose him as Governor of Nagasaki. Now my mind is made up, he shall go immediately. These Christian priests may be troublesome to get rid of, but we must give them short shrift. One or two examples may have to be made of them before the others see that they must leave the country. As for the natives, I conclude they will soon settle down to the old religion again, as soon as their false teachers are removed."

The Bonze looked doubtful.

"We may have more trouble with our own people than thou thinkest, your Highness. This new religion seems to have taken a strange hold on them, and they seem to worship with fanatical devotion this Christ-Man, as they call Him. They have pictures of Him hanging on a cross—crucified—and they gaze at it as if they found new life in the very looking at it."

"That picture must be suppressed," said Hideyoshi; it is encouraging rebellion to exalt crucifixion into a

thing to be worshipped. How would you go about exterminating it?"

The wily Bonze turned his dark eyes on his questioner as he replied:—

"I would suggest a number of plaster models being made of this Christ-Man, and that your magistrates should be furnished with one in every town. Then let a roll-call be made of the inhabitants, and compel each one, in swearing fresh allegiance to the Mikado and his ministers, to trample on the image, and declare openly that they have no connection with a religion which has proved itself disloyal to the powers that be. Let all be tested, women as well as men, for women are the worst in their servile devotion to this accursed Faith."

"Say no more, Bonze," said Hideyoshi, waving him from his presence. "Thy suggestions are good, and will probably be speedily acted upon; but I must be alone with my thoughts. Now go and partake of some needed refreshment, which they will supply thee outside."

The Bonze bowed low and left the room. Toda-Minbo, the secretary, who had been waiting outside, wondering at the lengthy interview, now entered, and was soon busily writing at Hideyoshi's dictation.

A draft of stringent measures to be considered for suppressing Christianity was soon made. Then Hideyoshi drew a long breath. As he glanced out on the beautiful landscape he shuddered. The day had changed. Big black clouds were rolling up from the sea, and a violent storm was beginning

"Look, Toda," cried Hideyoshi, "I like not the look of things, have we done right, thinkest thou, in drawing up this law? Are the gods vexed with us for disturbing the Christians?" And Toda-Minbo, thinking of his promotion (he had just been promised the Governorship of Nagasaki), replied:—

"Nay, my liege, they are pleased, and the storm is intended to suggest the violence with which you must overwhelm these wicked foreigners who are plotting against us. They must be burned, stoned, put to death if needs be, and the great Spirit of Buddha must once more reign supreme in the hearts of men. That is the real message which the gods are sending to us."

A few weeks after the visit of Bonze Bengu to Hideyoshi the following proclamation was posted on all public buildings in and about the neighbourhood of Nagasaki:—

Edict: "We have now made this town one of the chief centres of our Government.

"The administration of justice in this place is delegated to Toda-Minbo, and his orders must be strictly obeyed."

A simple notice enough, apparently having no connection with religion, but when Paul saw it, his cheek turned pale. He knew it spelt persecution to the bitter end. Already had the good and pious Prince been politely told to abdicate. Already was Toda in possession of his castle. Indeed, through the timely warning of Father Frois, this Prince and his family had fled the country. He had been advised that it was

better not to run into needless danger as the Government was much displeased with him at present. Nothing, however, seemed to result at first from the edict, and the town pursued as usual its brisk and prosperous trade. It was the calm before the storm.

One evening, as Paul and his family were seated round the brazier enjoying a fragrant cup of tea, the little Paul holding the party in roars of laughter with his naive childish sayings, two armed men suddenly entered the room. With all the native politeness of the race they apologised for their presence, but said they had come with orders from the Governor. Toda that next week—being the anniversary of the death of Buddha—all the inhabitants should assemble in the great temple at the top of the hill, and bring memorial offerings. The ancient religion was to be strictly restored for the future ; the new sect called Christians was to be no longer encouraged. The foreigners had been already served with notices that, if Christians, they were to leave the kingdom by a certain date, and all heads of houses were to give proof of their loyalty to the Mikado, and of their adherence to the Buddhist faith, by trampling on a picture which they, the guard, had brought with them. It was a mere matter of form, they said ; the picture was a representation of the Jesus, the Christians' God, and as Christianity was only another name for rebellion, this picture had been selected to be trampled on, in order that the people should understand that the laws made by the rulers of the land must be strictly obeyed.

"I have always obeyed the laws," said Paul, his

cheek flushing as the cruel edict was read, and the picture placed on the ground for him to step on, "and have ever discountenanced anything like opposition to the Government, but I am not ashamed to say that I am a Christian, and cannot go and worship Buddha in the temple, and that I will never dishonour my Lord and Saviour by treading on a picture of Him hanging on the Cross." Then, with a sudden burst of fervour, he knelt down, and gazed on the picture.

In a moment the native politeness had changed to stern administration of the law. Quickly was Paul bound and carried before the Governor Toda, and very soon he was lying in prison, condemned to death.

His heart bounded for joy when he heard that he was to glorify God by his death. When he had got over the first sharp pang of despair at being separated from his dear ones, he felt that it was a privilege to die for his blessed Master. He knew that it was of no use hoping that his life would be spared; his defence that he had always been a good and law-abiding citizen was not listened to; he was a Christian, and Christians who would not recant were no longer to be suffered to live.

The day before his death Paul was to be allowed to have a final interview with his wife. He was rather dreading this interview, not for his own, but for Mary's sake, and was surprised when she at last entered to see that she was smiling. There were tears in her eyes—but they were tears of joy. Putting her arms round his neck, she told him how glad she was that after all she was not going to leave him. Paul at first thought



PAPPENBERG ROCK, NAGASAKI.

that this awful trouble had deranged her senses, but soon the truth came out. Mary Anjiro being the wife of such a distinguished man could not be allowed to escape Toda's wrath. The picture of the Christ had been presented to her also to trample on. She had indignantly refused, and then a charge was trumped up against her of having harboured Portuguese spies and encouraged sedition by private meetings in her house since her husband's arrest.

She had held prayer-meetings certainly, she told the Governor, but of seditious politics she knew nothing. But, like her husband, her story was not listened to; summary punishment was to be meted out to both alike.

"Don't cry, dearest," said she, as the tears fell like summer rain from Paul's eyes; "I could almost sing for joy. I shall meet thee again so soon in Paradise. As for Maia and Goto and little Paul, they are safe enough; they have been taken by kind friends under a pretended message from me away to Macao. They will know nothing about it till it is all over. They know that you are in some sort of danger, but nothing more, and it is best so. Perhaps, in years to come, they will be able to return, but even should they be also put to the test, they will stand firm."

Next morning Paul and his wife were taken from prison and carried to the top of the Pappenberg rock in the harbour of Nagasaki. After they had refused a final offer to save their lives by trampling on the Cross, they were fastened in sacks and hurled from the steep cliff into the sea below.

The order which Hideyoshi had issued in 1587, that all foreign missionaries should leave Japan was generally disregarded, though the worship of the Christians, especially in the neighbourhood of Nagasaki, was from this time forward conducted in secret. In 1593 six Franciscan and three Jesuit missionaries were arrested in Osaka and Kioto and were carried to Nagasaki where they were burnt. About the same time a number of Christians were banished to the island of Sado.

Hideyoshi died in 1598. On his death-bed he had turned once again favourably towards the Christian Faith, as it gradually came to him how greatly the Buddhists had exaggerated the political interference of the Portuguese and native missionaries, and how much Christianity had done to elevate the condition of all classes of society in the kingdom. So the stringent measures originally taken against the Christians were relaxed, and for many years after Hideyoshi had passed away the "good Fathers" carried on peacefully and with great success their ministerial work.

When Hideyoshi died he left his little son Hideyori to the care of his general and chief adviser Ieyasu. This man had long been watching his opportunity to secure the chief power in the land, and very soon he accomplished his aim, and ruled as Shogun. His was a cruel, harsh disposition, but it suited him to treat the Christians with a certain amount of tolerance, for he was quick enough to see that, owing to the persecution in Hideyoshi's time, the trade of Japan had received a serious check, and a check was the last thing he desired,

for if the Christians encouraged Spanish and Portuguese traders to visit the country that meant wealth and power to himself; he would soon amass a fortune by levying taxes on all foreign vessels, and the natural resources of the country were so rich, that, if properly worked, Japan ought soon to become one of the most powerful and prosperous nations in the world, and that would mean great personal gain to himself.

But these resources would not yield their full value without calling in foreign aid in the working of them: the vast stores of gold, silver, copper, tin, and rich quartz, which seamed the mountains from end to end, why should not they be unearthed? True, something was being done, especially in the island of Sado, where thousands of native Christians, banished there by Hideyoshi when he first relaxed his severity towards them, were working the mines with some degree of success.

But the Spanish and Portuguese miners? He had heard of their skill—how quickly they dug out the rich ore, how wonderfully they ventilated and engineered the mines! If he could but get hold of some of them, they would superintend and instruct the natives, and then their methods could be carried to every part of the country.

Ieyasu saw that the Portuguese missionaries would be valuable allies in this scheme, so he began to be very gracious and polite to them. These good and holy men, little suspecting that the Shogun's motives in being kind were entirely mercenary, gave him much valuable information, and soon handsome presents were sent from Japan to the King of Spain (Spain and

Portugal being at that time united under one crown), begging him to send Christian clergy, also miners and artificers, as soon as possible, and in return he should have a share in the rich products of the land.

Among those who had retired to the island of Sado to pursue an honest, though laborious livelihood were Goto Shinku and his wife Maia, and their son Paul, the latter a fine-looking young man of some three-and-twenty years of age. The mother's face bore lasting impress of that awful sorrow which had robbed her of her parents in one dread day, but it was a very sweet face still, and, though she had to work hard, yet it was a fairly happy life, full of peaceful contentment and trust in God.

Goto had become a great favourite with Okubo, the Governor of Sado; his knowledge of engineering had proved of much service in developing the mines, and Paul, his son, was fast becoming to Okubo as useful as his father. Maia had plenty to do in looking after the home and making the small income go as far as it would in keeping the home. It was a very different life to that which she had contemplated when a child—as the daughter of the noble Anjiro; but, like her parents, she had felt that the world was well lost for Christ—she and her husband and son all thought alike, and there could not have been found a happier family among the exiles than that of Goto Shinku. They were now allowed to pursue their religion without interference, and many a pleasant hour did they spend with the Christian clergy after service on Sundays and holy days. Christianity was once more spread-



HOEING RICE.

ing fast. The church bell was often heard pealing through valley and mountain, and a familiar sight was that of the good clergyman, Father Fernandez, as he went in and out amongst his flock ; his chief pastoral work lay among the numerous officials and labourers in the mines, and many a one sent there in exile for secular wrong-doing did he win to true repentance and real amendment of life.

One beautiful summer evening Goto came home with a worried look on his face ; his wife saw in a moment that something had upset him, but with womanly tact waited till he should have satisfied his bodily needs, and then she knew he would unburden his mind. She was glad their son Paul was absent, having gone on an errand for the Governor to a distant part of the island. Maia Shinku always contrived to have an appetising meal for her husband to sit down to after the labours of the day, and the supper on this particular evening was no exception to the rule. The lacquer trays spread on the floor were beautifully polished, the dish of broiled fish done to perfection, the plate of sweet potatoes were well boiled, a tiny saucer of pickles to eat with them stood near, and the small white wooden tub contained the staple dish of smoking rice. Rice is beautifully cooked in Japan ; gummy, ill-cooked rice is considered a disgrace to any housewife. The fish, the potatoes, and three bowls of rice (the bowls being the size of a small teacup) were done full justice to by Goto, then tea followed, and, when the trays were removed, he spoke.

"Maia," he said, "I have heard bad news to-day—Father Fernandez is leaving us."

"What? The good Padre? Oh, Goto! this is indeed a blow—how we shall all miss him, Paul in particular, as he prepared him for Confirmation. Why is he going?"

"He is wanted back in Spain immediately to undertake for a time the training of a number of young men, who are eventually to come to Japan as missionaries. No one else is fitted to undertake the work, for Father Fernandez knows all the difficulties and pit-falls that must be avoided over here by Christians, and will give any young clergyman who is inclined to be rash or too enthusiastic timely and sober warning. He says he feels it is his duty to go, so we cannot hold him back."

"Certainly not, and I conclude he will return some day; but I hope we are not to be left without any shepherd?"

"No. I am glad to say one Christopher Ferreya is coming in his place, and with him a number of Portuguese and Spanish workmen; they are to carry out some new methods in excavating the mines in which our ordinary miners will want instruction. If they keep quiet, and do not meddle in politics, all will go well; but should any of them be sent from any other motive, woe betide us all, Maia!" and here Goto whispered low as if the very walls had ears—"If the King of Spain has any designs against the Government our lives will be in the greatest possible danger."

"Oh! surely not, dear husband; have not we suffered enough already?—my own dear father and

mother sacrificed. And the land has been peaceful now for nearly a quarter of a century. Oh, Goto! do not hint at such a terrible state of things."

"Darling, I ought not to have frightened thee; do not distress thyself needlessly," said Goto tenderly, as he saw the tears fast gathering in her eyes; "but we must warn Paul not to become intimate with these strangers till we have watched them for some time. As for our new Padre, I asked Father Fernandez about him, but he knew little, except that he was very popular in Spain and liked by every one."

"To be liked by every one means not always the best of men," said Maia thoughtfully. "Our Lord Himself hath said, 'Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you'."

"That is true enough; still, we will not judge our new shepherd beforehand, but trust him as we have done Father Fernandez—I doubt not but that he will prove a great comfort to us. And let us not trouble about evils which may never come; we are in God's hands, and He will lead us safely through all."

There was a tender note of reproof in Goto's voice which made Maia feel as if she had been uncharitable without cause. Still, there was an inward feeling of uneasiness, which was not allayed when she saw their new clergyman. She told herself she was foolish to feel any distrust, yet she could not help it. Christopher Ferreya was a fine-looking man with clear-cut features, a pair of keen blue eyes, and musical voice; his sermons were powerful and eloquent. He was a diligent visitor among his flock, and soon his praise was on

every tongue. Maia reproached herself for not joining in the general chorus of approbation, but the silvery voice and pleasant smile seemed to lack something, she could not tell what. She longed for the dark rugged features of Father Fernandez back again, and his somewhat brusque though kindly words of counsel and reproof.

Months passed on, and the exiles in their island home of Sada led a peaceful, uneventful life. The new Spanish and Portuguese workmen had been tactful and pleasant; they had given the Japanese miners many useful hints, and there was some talk of their leaving soon to go to another part of Japan. Goto had picked up much valuable and scientific knowledge from their chief engineer, and had become very friendly with him. In course of time he hoped to gain leave to quit Sado and set up in Nagasaki or Yedo as an engineer on his own account, and live once more as his forefathers had done; he would like his son Paul to take his place in the rank of life in which he had been born. He hoped that day was not far off; the Governor had certainly taken a great fancy to the young man, in fact, now the lad was scarcely ever in the mines, but carrying messages for Okubo hither and thither, being installed as a sort of private secretary. Paul was clever and would shine in any society, and both Maia and Goto felt their fears about the future vanish into thin air as they took note of how happy and cheerfully everything and everybody seemed working.

So when the blow fell it came with the greater shock. It was a lovely night in August, the month of astrology,

when Japanese poets wrote sonnets to the stars and various events are prophesied by their wise men. Goto was reposing peacefully on his cushions in the sitting-room enjoying his well-earned rest, and Maia was looking out into the garden and then up to the starlit sky. One bright star in particular arrested her fancy; perhaps there in that one spot was Paradise, and her darling father and mother were among the shining throng; and the words came to her mind, "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." They were shining for ever and ever now, for by their martyrdom they had turned thousands to righteousness, and given an impetus to the Christian Faith which would never die out. Might they all stand as firm if the test to their Faith were to come in like manner; but all was going well—God had been very good to them. Ah! that figure coming along by the little pond of gold-fish—was it Paul? They had seen but little of him lately; he was always with the Governor. No, it was not Paul!—there were two of them, and her heart failed her as she saw the glitter of a sword. One of the late visitors threw off a cloak, the other gave a shrill cry for the door to be opened.

"We arrest you in the Mikado's name, as being concerned in a plot to overthrow him and the authority of his servant the Shogun," cried the men as they entered.

"What meanest thou by this intrusion?" said Goto indignantly, as he put his arm tenderly round his weeping wife. "We have always done our duty and con-

formed to the laws of the land, and obeyed the Governor!"

"Worse luck for thee," said the man with the sword roughly, "for Okubo is a traitor, and he and thy son Paul are now prisoners."

At these last words Maia fainted away in her husband's arms. Goto sternly bade the intruders stand aside while he used restoratives to restore consciousness, which were not long in taking effect, for Maia was a brave woman, and when the first shock of the news was over she thought only of how she might aid and comfort her husband.

"I am better," she said, rising to her feet, "and we are all innocent—we have nothing to fear. Paul has only been a messenger boy in the hands of the Governor; he will soon be set free. Let us hear all thou hast to tell us."

The story was soon told, the two officials becoming kinder in their manner as they perceived that Maia was speaking the truth, and that husband and wife were entirely ignorant of any plot.

It had been hatching for months, they said, ostensibly against the Mikado, but in reality against the Shogun Ieyasu. Okubo was the ring-leader; he had been in constant communication with the King of Spain, and when the Shogun wished for Spanish and Portuguese workmen to exploit the mines, seized the opportunity to make arrangements for political agitators and spies to be sent over in large numbers. He told the King that in course of time the country would belong to Spain, and that the Japanese people would welcome

him as a friend, who would free them from the despotic rule of Ieyasu. A determined attack on the Shogun's life and that of the Emperor had been planned, and the date fixed, and it was only discovered just in time by a boat containing incriminating documents being wrecked by a squall off the coast. The occupants of the boat were drowned, but the papers found upon them revealed a terrible state of affairs; the names of the conspirators were written down in blood, drawn from the end of the middle finger of the ring-leader, the Governor of Sado. The boat was on its way to the port of Nagasaki to catch a vessel outward bound for Spain, when, by an unexpected turn of weather, it was wrecked. Full information had been given in the secret papers of the whole of the plot; it had been most cleverly organised, but now most of the conspirators had been arrested, and all those who had any dealings with them were to be kept under strict surveillance. That was an awful night for the island of Sado, and worse was yet to come, for Ieyasu, determined to crush all rebellion for the future, issued an edict that as the foreign sect calling themselves Christians had been guilty of treason, all who had embraced its Faith were instantly to renounce it, or immediately suffer death. The test was that they must publicly recant, and trample on a representation of the Saviour. Ieyasu knew this last test had been a useful weapon in former times, and it was applied with renewed vigour now.

Goto Shinku and Maia were not cast into prison, as the officials found out they had taken no active part in the plot, but they were kept under strict surveillance

and were not allowed to leave the island. They had no wish to do so, for was not their only child in the hands of the enemy lying in prison close by? They would never desert him, and probably they would all meet death together.

"He will never deny his Lord," said his mother proudly, though her eyes were red with weeping; "every day I bless Father Fernandez for having prepared him so well for Confirmation."

"Ah!" replied Goto feebly (the strong man had become a ghost of his former self). "Father Fernandez attended to his own business and did not mix himself up in politics; but this new man is different. I hear that he was deeply involved with the Governor, and that the one condition of sparing his life will be trampling on the Cross and renouncing the Christian Faith.

"Oh! surely he of all others will stand firm," said Maia, but as she spoke her heart belied her.

"We will hope so," said Goto doubtfully; "but they are putting him to the torture to-day, and then we shall know for certain."

That night news came to the little band of Christians in Sado that their Padre had recanted! He had been put to horrible torture; refusing to trample on the Cross he had been hung by his feet in such a way that his head was buried in a hole in the ground from which air and light were excluded, his right hand was left loose that he might make the sign of recantation. Let not any one judge him harshly; for four long hours he hung there, then he made the sign. But the

bitterest punishment was yet to come. With a rare refinement of cruelty he was appointed President of the Tribunal before which Christians were brought for condemnation, and one of the first persons he had to condemn to death was the youthful Paul Shinku.

The noble bearing and fearless demeanour of the young Christian moved even the hearts of the stony officials, as, instead of trampling on the copper cross which was presented to him, he took it up and reverently kissed it. He told the Court that he had been innocent of any treason, he had merely been a messenger boy in the hands of the Governor; but he would never be guilty of denying the Saviour Who had died for him. He was informed that three days only would be given him to prepare for death, but nothing moved him, and it was plainly seen he meant to stand firm.

That same night Goto arrived at the doors of the prison, desiring an interview with the Governor. No one would have recognised in the shaky grey-haired man the once stalwart engineer of the mines; sorrow had indeed done fell work, and this last blow was almost insupportable. He had not dared to tell the mother of her son's fate, yet the news could not long be kept from her. There was no hope of Paul's life being saved, so the new Governor told him, unless he recanted.

"He will never do that," said the father, and his eyes took a strange gleam of joy.

"Then he must die. I am sorry for the lad, he is young and would make his way in the world, but I cannot spare him; the numbers about to die have

already been sent to the Shogun; he examines each list himself and each name. He is determined to make no exception."

"If the numbers and names are right he would ask no awkward questions, I presume?"

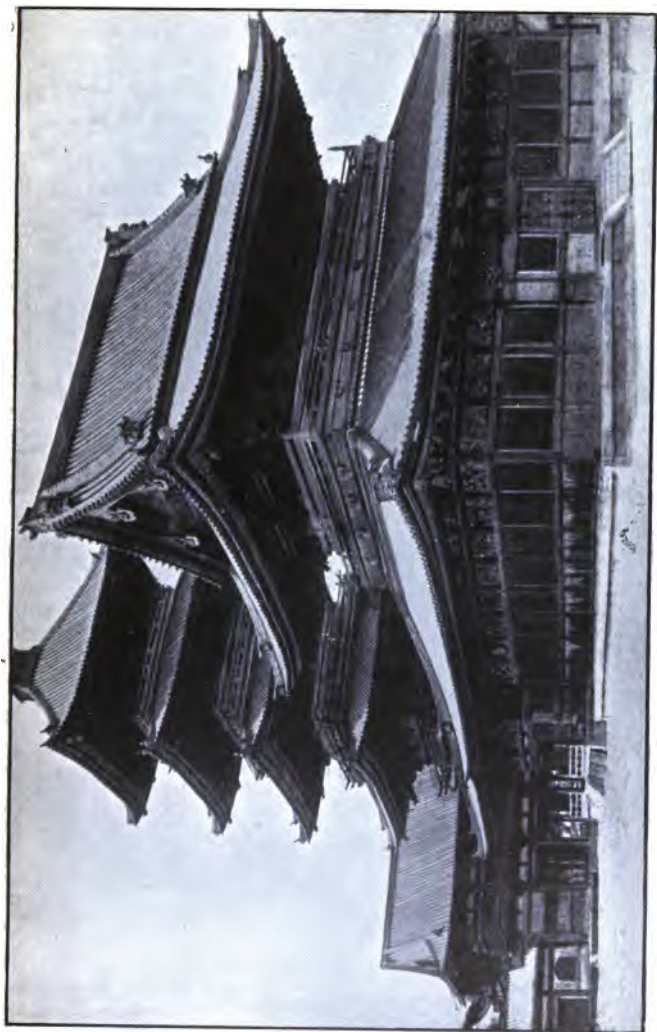
"No; but why parley thus? Nothing can save him unless he recants, and the numbers must tally with the Shogun's list."

A long conversation followed, Goto did not leave the prison.

In the early grey of the morning, as young Paul Shinku knelt praying in his cell, he was aroused, money was slipped into his hand, and he was told to go to his mother and take her at once to a house named, in a poor quarter of Nagasaki. No questions were to be asked; he was to do as he was told, for it was the only chance of saving his mother's life. He was not to look back, he was to go straight on and fly from Sado as quickly as possible. As the lad obediently followed the directions a grey-haired man, from the slit of a narrow window, watched for his exit. He took one long lingering look at his only son, then he turned to the Governor with a smile.

"All is right," he said. "I am ready now; do with me what thou wilt."

Ieyasu little knew the power of the Cross when it had once taken hold of the Japanese mind. Through the length and breadth of Japan went the edict, but thousands cheerfully laid down their lives sooner than deny Christ. Every resource that the wickedness of man could desire was tried in order to once more pagan-



TENNOJI TEMPLE, OSAKA.

ise the people, but with little effect. Thousands of the native converts fled to China, Formosa, and the Philippine Islands, but many could not thus escape from persecution; yet few quailed or renounced their Faith. All the tortures that barbaric cruelty could invent were used: they were wrapped in straw sacks, then piled in heaps of living fuel and set on fire, but they calmly let the fire of wood cleft from the crosses before which they had once prayed consume them, or walked cheerfully to the fearful *fosse*, or were flung alive into the open grave about to be filled up. Mothers carried their babies at their bosoms or their children in their arms to the fire, the sword, or the precipice, rather than leave them behind to be educated in the Pagan faith.

If any one should doubt the sincerity and fervour of the Christian converts of to-day, or the ability of the Japanese to accept a higher form of Faith, or their willingness to suffer for what they believe, they have only to read the accounts preserved in English, Dutch, French, Latin, and Japanese, of various witnesses to the fortitude of the Japanese Christians of the seventeenth century. They will see there that the annals of the primitive Church furnish no truer martyrdoms or heroic self-sacrifice than those of the Japanese Christians.

Modern Japanese know little of what their noble ancestors suffered in this respect; their leaders, ashamed of the past, have kept it carefully from them.

This first great persecution occurred in 1614. Ten years later all foreigners, except the Dutch and

Chinese, were banished from Japan by the Shogun Iyemidzu. Fresh persecutions of Japanese Christians immediately followed the issue of this decree, which were even worse than the earlier persecutions had been. The Christians made no resistance till the year 1636 when, driven to despair, they attempted to defend themselves in the castle of Shimabara, in Kyushiu. Thirty thousand Christians took refuge in the castle. The Shogun sent an army, with orders to destroy all the Christians, which captured the castle after a siege of three months. All the Christians were condemned to death. Those of them, several thousands in all, who survived the massacre which ensued on the capture of the castle, are said to have been taken to the Pappenberg rock and thrown into the sea. The visitor to Japan as he enters the harbour of Nagasaki may see the conspicuous rock which was the site of their martyrdom.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was July 8th, in the year 1853. Japan had now been shut up from intercourse with the outside world for over two hundred years.

After the self-sacrifice of Goto Shinku, who was only one amongst many of the noble army of martyrs, Paul Shinku and his mother had fled to Nagasaki as directed, and there for years, in a humble room disguised as ordinary peasants, they managed to earn just enough for their bodily needs. It was a strange life for the descendants of one of the noblest families in Japan; but to disclose their identity would have meant instant death, and they held fast to their Faith in common with others like themselves. This little band of exiles assembled every Sunday for secret worship in the recesses of the mountains, comforted and supported in their loneliness by that Name which is above every other name. In course of time Paul married one of this Christian band, and for years upheld the Christian Faith in all its purity. The Government were in utter ignorance of the existence of this band of Christians, they thought they had obliterated

every one of them from the earth. A sum of money had been voted yearly for the employment of Buddhist teachers well acquainted with the tenets of the "accursed Jesumons" to stamp out the smallest appearance of the Creed, and to banish any person suspected of holding it. No Japanese was allowed to go to a foreign land under pain of death, no foreign ship except those of the Dutch were allowed to enter any port, and should the slightest opposition be given to any of these decrees it was only necessary to mention one word, a word which bated the breath, blanched the cheek, and smote with fear as with an earthquake shock—that name was Christ.

As one writer has said: "It was the synonym of sorcery, sedition, and all that was hostile to the purity of the home and the peace of society; all over the Empire, in every city, town, village, and hamlet, by the roadside, ferry, or mountain pass, at every entrance to the capital stood the public notice boards, on which, with prohibition against the great crimes that disturb the relations of society and Government, was one tablet, written with a deeper brand of guilt—with a more hideous memory of blood, with a more awful terror of torture, than when the like superscription was affixed at the top of a cross that stood between two thieves on a hill outside Jerusalem. Its daily and familiar sight ever and anon caused the peasant to clasp hands and utter a fresh prayer, the Bonze to add new venom to his malediction, and the magistrate to shake his head. So thoroughly were the Jesumons (corrupt sect) supposed to be eradicated in the year

1853 that its existence was merely historical, remembered only as an awful scar on the national memory."

It was at one of these notice boards, at the mouth of the Gulf of Yedo, that a keen-eyed naval Japanese official was gazing on that peaceful summer's day.

"It is time it was down," he said to himself; "we have been shut up long enough."

The notice board bore the following inscription:—

"So long as the sun shall warm the earth let no Christian set foot in Japan, and if the King of Spain or the King of Portugal, or the great God of the Christians Himself, come to this land he shall pay for it with his head.

"Law No. 1.—The evil sect called Christian is strictly prohibited; suspicious persons should be reported to the proper officers, and rewards will be given.

"Law No. 2.—Persons uniting together in numbers for any object are called leaguers; persons who conspire to leave the ward or village in which they live are called runaways. All these acts are strictly prohibited.

"NOTE.—With respect to the Christian sect, the existing prohibition must be strictly observed."

The man leaning at the pier head read these notices carefully through, though he had seen them a hundred times before, saying once more:—

"Yes! Those notices block the way to all progress, and the Government is blind. We have no navy, no army—we are as babes, knowing nothing of the outside world, and any day now we may be overcome and

taken captives. We ought to establish friendly relations with outsiders without delay."

Even as he spoke he raised his glasses and looked seaward. In the distance a fleet of ships was making its way up the bay. Were they to be refused entrance, as all others had been for the last two centuries? He recognised the flag—the American Stars and Stripes; they had come last year with seven hundred troops on board, and anchored in the Bay of Yedo. They had been politely told to go, but Commodore Perry, their leader, had stopped to parley. He had met the Japanese officials with reproach.

"Here," said he, "you have some of the finest harbours in the world, yet you selfishly shut out strangers from taking refuge in storms, or from allowing them to get provisions and water on their way out or homeward bound. Year after year you allow hundreds of wrecks on your coast—wrecks which could easily be prevented—or else you compel voyagers to die of thirst and starvation for want of needful stores being taken in. Believe me, such conduct is bringing on you the hatred of all nations; some day you will have a rude awakening, and that which you will not offer voluntarily may be taken from you by force. But if you open your ports now you will gain advantage, you will have performed a graceful and courteous act: the foreigners will trade with you and you will increase in power and influence. Otherwise," and he shrugged his shoulders, "I dare not contemplate the result. Think over what I have said, and next year I will come again for an answer."

And he had gone sailing away, his band playing gaily the American National air as they took their departure.

Katsu was the name of the Japanese official who was the chief guardian of the ports, and afterwards became President of the Japanese navy. He with his comrades had been thunderstruck at the calmness of the attack; but the words had sunk deep into their minds, and they had not been long in conveying them to the heads of the Government, though with little result.

There was no wise ruler then in the land. The country was ripe for revolution, and the Shogun's rule had been resented for years, and till the Emperor should rule in person no reforms could take place. Katsu and his friends knew this well enough. Six months later, in February, 1854, Commodore Perry with his magnificent fleet sailed up the Gulf of Yedo. He had come for his answer, and he meant to have it. What was to be done? Was the door to be shut in the face of all advancement, and the country left to continue in discontent and isolation? Or was a great change about to take place?

Katsu looked round the sea coast. For more than two centuries they had had no dealings with any foreign nation except the Dutch, who had been allowed, under servile conditions, to occupy a small island in the Bay of Nagasaki. How had they been permitted to remain when every other foreigner had been turned out? The American Admiral might ask an awkward question about this: well, it was not a very creditable story, if history was to be believed. The Dutch had

been fiercely jealous of the Spanish, Portuguese and English in those far back times who competed with them in their trade with Japan, and when the persecution of the Christians had been set on foot they had helped the Government to turn them out. They did not want to meddle with politics, they said, they only wanted to be allowed to bring stores of spices from their colonies, and in return to receive Japanese goods. They were confined to a little artificial island, 600 feet by 200 feet, in the harbour of Nagasaki, and a Japanese guard occupied the bridge which connected it with the mainland. One ship only was allowed to come once in six months. Once every four years the Dutch representative had to go to Yedo and to bear the costly gifts required as tribute. The Chinese were allowed to live in Nagasaki but nowhere else in Japan. Charles II. sent a vessel to Japan but it was not allowed to trade, as the Dutch had told the Japanese that Charles had married a daughter of the King of Portugal. A Chinese junk was sent away from Nagasaki in 1695 because a Chinese book was found on board which contained an account of the Roman cathedral in Peking. In 1709 an Italian priest, the Abbe Sidotti, succeeded in getting on shore. He was seized and kept a prisoner for several years until his death.

As Katsu saw Commodore Perry's fleet sailing up the bay he was convinced in his own mind that the men who could build such ships as these, and who were yet gentle, kind, patient and firm, who having force did not use it, but demanded to be treated with courtesy and, in turn, extended it to Japan,

could not be real foes. The stranger was bringing presents this time from the President of the United States to the Emperor. This was rather awkward, for, in reality, there was no Emperor—the Shogun was the ruler. Katsu came forward and told him politely that Japan would never conclude a treaty such as he had come to propose, but the Admiral only smiled, and said that he could not leave till he had received a satisfactory reply to the letter which he had brought in the previous year. After long negotiation a treaty was signed by which two ports were opened to American trade, and in 1858 a further treaty with England was signed by which six ports were opened.

In 1869, in a humble cottage outside the town of Nagasaki, a dying man was looking across the sea at the setting sun. Though his hands were rough with toil his face bore the lineaments of noble birth, and those who thus judged him would have been correct, for he was a direct descendant of the most noble Anjiro, "Paul of the Holy Faith," who had been baptised by the Bishop of Goa, and had first persuaded Father Xavier to bring the Gospel to Japan, and had been the first to suffer death for his Lord and Master.

From generation to generation had the descendants of that noble family kept the Faith intact, watching eagerly for the time to come when they could worship as Christians in the light of open day, without fear of persecution; and Paul Shinku, as he lay dying, with a bright smile on his face, seemed to know that deliverance was near at hand.

For the entrance of Commodore Perry into the

Gulf of Yedo had been the harbinger of a new state of affairs. There had been a revolution in 1868, wonderfully free from bloodshed, but which had accomplished much ; Japan had opened its arms to the world, and, in doing so, had found itself free ! The Shogun's despotic rule had ceased, the feudal lords who obeyed his orders had disappeared, the Mikado ruled as the real Emperor in his palace, and wished his people to know that, in future, all laws and decrees would come direct from him, and that he had nothing but the true welfare of his people at heart. The notice boards against the Christians, if not actually taken down, were being allowed to fall into disrepair, and the edicts against them were a dead letter. True, lately there had been another issued for all Christians to leave Nagasaki and go to a distance, but that was only because the Government had been amazed to find that, in spite of all the precautions of the last two hundred and fifty years, some ten thousand of this sect (now called Kirisutans) were still living round Nagasaki, to say nothing of other parts of Japan. These Kirisutans had been meddlesome people in the past, and might prove troublesome again in the future, so the Government was advised that it would be as well to clear them out, for Christians and political rebels had been closely associated together in former Japanese history.

On the whole the decree had been humanely carried out ; some who had proved obstinate about leaving had been cast into prison, but there had been no extensive persecution or harsh measures. As for Paul



BEGGAR PILGRIMS.

Shinku, the officials did not touch him, for they knew his days were numbered, and every one in Nagasaki loved and respected him. He had met with internal injuries in loading goods for his Dutch master at the docks, injuries which were beyond the power of man to cure; his only regret in dying was leaving his young daughter of fifteen alone in the world. He had nothing to bequeath to her of worldly goods, except a few trifles and a box, which had been sealed for more than two hundred years and handed down from generation to generation as the family's most sacred possession. It was the hall-mark of their Christianity. Inside it was believed that documents relating to the persecutions would be found, and other tokens of their Faith, but a promise had been made by each possessor in turn that never should the seal of that box be broken until Christianity was established in the land, and till the Lord Jesus could be worshipped in open day. The promise had been faithfully kept, and though, in course of years, the Kirisutans had preserved but little of the Faith of their ancestors, yet the light had not died out. It was Paul himself who had baptised his baby daughter Saya, when the mother who gave her birth lay dying. He had tried to teach her what little he knew, but two and a half centuries without any organised form of worship had done its work; and the Kirisutans themselves hardly knew in what they believed. They were groping and stretching out their hands for more light.

Paul Shinku had been feeling very happy these last days of his life, for he seemed to know the light

was on its way. On that early summer morning he raised himself on his couch, and gazed long and tenderly across the sea, where the dawn of day was breaking. "Yes," he said, "I have heard my grandfather speak of the Sun of Righteousness, Who should arise with healing in His wings. He is coming to Japan. Saya," and he turned to his daughter, "I feel the 'Jesumons,' as we used to be called, will have peace under our Emperor; you will never desert them, dear child; you will never join the Buddhists, you know all that our dear ones suffered at their hands in centuries gone by?"

"Yes, father," replied the girl simply, as she moistened the dying lips with a feather dipped in tea. "I will always keep to the Jesumons."

"I know not what may happen to thee, cherished one, but I think thy plan of going to serve in a tea-house is a good one, only never, never go to the *joro-yas*." (The *joro-yas* were a low class of tea-house where girls were often condemned to a life of toil and unspeakable degradation.)

"Never, father," said Saya firmly. "Do not fret about me, darling; I shall get on all right. I shall go to Yedo."

"And the box," continued her father. "Take it with you; it will remind you of your Faith, though I fear you may not meet many Kirisutans, and you may not speak of them; but if the light breaks it will be thy privilege to open the box."

Paul fell back on his cushion exhausted with the effort of speaking, and Saya, her eyes full of tears,

came and threw herself down beside him. She half feared it might be her father's last day on earth. It was heart-breaking. They had been all in all to each other for many years; it had been a life full of toil, she working hard doing her best to make home comfortable when he returned tired from the docks. And the little band of Kirisutans had been very friendly, as once a week they had met to go through a secret form of worship.

Now all was changed—her father was dying, the Kirisutans were all to be dispersed—and she must go out into the wide world to earn her bread. It was very sad, but she would strive to be good and true, and live so as to meet her father again in Heaven.

It was a sweet face which looked into that of the dying man, and the dress, though poor, was neat and picturesque. Paul might well dread his daughter going as a waitress into a low-class tea-house, which was too often only another name for a den of infamy. She was one of Japan's fairest daughters, and the noble ancestry showed itself in the poise of the head and every turn of the graceful figure.

So the long hours of that summer's day wore away, and the sun began to sink in splendour behind the sea. Paul had been in a heavy stupor for many hours, but now he seemed to revive, and took from Saya's hands with some degree of appetite the small bowl of rice and cup of tea which she had prepared with extra care for him.

"I feel better," he said. "Saya, do you know, when I was asleep all this time I had a beautiful dream.

I saw Christ: first He looked sad, He was hanging on a cross. And then the scene changed, and I saw Him all glorious in white. His face was radiant with joy, and He stretched out His hands to me, and said: 'I am coming soon to take thee home, Paul; and fear not for Saya, I will be with her. All will be well? And then I woke.'

Saya looked troubled. She did not understand this rambling talk; she feared the worst. Her father had a strange bright light about his face which she had never seen there before; the setting sun threw shafts of ruddy glory over the bed, and illumined the humble chamber.

Paul took Saya's hand within his own and drew her close to him. "Good-bye," he said, and he closed his eyes.

CHAPTER IX.

IT was the year 1872 ; only three years had passed since the death of Paul Shinku, and Saya his daughter was growing to be a woman.

But, though sedate in manner, her face was not sad, only that the eyes wore a sweet, intent look as if watching and waiting for something which should tell her that all that had been suffered and wrought for eight generations past had not been in vain. When her father died, Saya found that she had a terrible struggle for bread. A brief but severe persecution of the Kirisutans had taken place immediately after his funeral ; she was very near being cast into prison, with a number of other innocent people, as the Government had given a hasty order that a certain street in Nagasaki should be cleared, for it was supposed to contain persons suspected of being hostile to the new order of affairs.

The young girl had fled in haste, leaving herself no time to gather up the few possessions her father had bequeathed her, except the sealed box, which she determined she would never part with. Hastily

she made her way to Yedo, which had now changed its name to Tokio; it was the thriving capital of the country and the seat of the new Government. Here she wandered about for a time, dependent on chance charity for her daily meals. Being young and pretty she had several offers from the proprietors of the *joro-yas* to go as waitress; but Saya warned by her father of the danger of such places, prepared to starve sooner than enter them.

At last, she engaged herself to help a small peasant farmer and his wife with a large family. It was a life of hard toil, but Saya was content to stay some years till she had gathered up a little money to dress nicely, when she was quickly enlisted as waitress to a first-class tea-house which stood on the borders of a wood some miles outside Tokio; and here, for the last ten years, she had been a most valued and trusted servant.

The good food and fine country air, with comparative freedom from hard toil, had developed her natural beauty, so that at the age of thirty-one she was very attractive. Many were the advances made to her; but Saya, though her religion was of the most imperfect and vague kind, had not forgotten it, and had mentally determined never to unite herself to any one in marriage who did not belong to the Faith of her forefathers.

Rumours reached her from time to time that Christian missionaries had once more set foot in Japan, and she resolved, as soon as she could get a long holiday, she would try and find out some of its leaders, and if they held the same tenets as her father, enrol



COUNTRY JAPANESE WOMAN GOING TO MARKET. 7

herself as one of their Church members; but eight generations of persecution of the bitterest kind had warned her to be cautious, so for several years she lived a life of great seclusion as regarded her religious duties, keeping them entirely to the privacy of her chamber. Yet she felt, as her father had done when dying, that she was only "waiting"—waiting for the morning—for the dawn of the true Rising Sun, and that the day was not very far off.

It was a pleasant spring evening in the "blossoming month," and that part of Tokio known as the Billingsgate of Japan wore a lively aspect. The quay was crowded with people, and the canal was covered with fishing boats, from which fish of every kind was being unloaded. Amongst others, dolphins, sharks and porpoises were being brought in by men with cords slung from bamboo rods over the shoulders, for a great number of whale and shark merchants reside in Tokio, and do a good trade in oil, to say nothing of the Japanese themselves, who boil the flesh of sharks and whales and preserve it in fat.

Besides the fish industry, this thriving capital carries on a large business in silk, cotton and rice, as the warehouses lining the banks of the canal plainly show, while hundreds of boats laden with bamboo canes, matting, and a thousand pretty trifles tell of the foreigner's appreciation of those fancy goods in which the Japanese workman has proved himself second to none.

Along the picturesque and well-kept road called the Tokaido, running through a suburb of Tokio, a jinriksha

was being carried swiftly along, and ever and anon the passers-by would look curiously at the stranger within, a man with a strong, yet gentle face, wearing the dress of an English clergyman.

The old open sort of palanquin had long been abandoned for the jinriksha, a big sort of perambulator carriage, gaudily painted and drawn by two men—one in the shafts, and one doing tandem in front. They carried the Englishman very easily and quickly, and when he stopped them sometimes to ask if they were not tired, they only smiled, and commenced running at double quick pace again; so, finding argument of no avail, he leaned back in his cushions, and gave himself up to the beauty of the spring evening.

The river was watering the countryside, the gardens were green with shrubs of camphor and vegetable wax, and the smell of very sweet-scented blossoms came laden on the breeze. Yes! Japan was very beautiful, and with God's help it would be made still more so by the preaching of Jesus Christ. And he gazed with interest at the suburban houses with their pretty little gardens laid out in miniature with rocks, valleys, fountains, tiny lakes of gold-fish, and rustic bridges. What might not such a clever, energetic, race accomplish when filled with the love of Christ?

He had left the suburbs of the city now, and was getting into the more open country. At the next decent-looking tea-house he would halt and obtain some refreshments; he fancied that there might be one in that pretty belt of thick trees, just half a mile onward.

And so it came to pass that as Saya Shinku was standing outside, enjoying also the sweet spring evening, she was surprised by the sudden appearance of a jinriksha, and hastened to answer with a Japanese woman's grace the Englishman's request, made in very fair Japanese—"Could he be accommodated with a meal and a shake-down for the night?"

"Certainly; they were always glad to welcome strangers, and a meal should be ready directly. The fish was beautifully fresh—just brought from the quay, and there was always rice, and the best of tea."

And soon the Englishman was sitting down to a well-cooked repast.

Saya was senior waitress now in the establishment, doing her work tactfully and well, and the Englishman could not but admire the way in which she directed the young girls under her, with a mixture of kindness and firmness. There was a gentle, attractive look in her face which made him long to win her to his own Faith. A big bell was ringing outside calling people to the Buddhist temple hard by to worship, and the clergyman asked Saya if she ever found time in the midst of her busy life to attend to her religious duties.

A frightened but brave look crossed Saya's face; then she looked hard at the stranger, and something in his countenance seemed to give her confidence, as she answered in a low whisper:—

"Sir, I do not belong to the Buddhist faith, and you—you are English. Are you what they call a Kirisutan?"

"Yes, I believe in Jesus Christ," was the reply.

Saya's face brightened up with a strange joy.

"Then you must belong to the 'Jesumons,'" she said. "Oh! sir, tell me quickly, does the Government allow the Jesumons to worship now in open day without persecution?"

The Englishman looked in his turn with strange interest into the girl's face; then he said:—

"The Government allow Christians to worship without fear all over the land. We have churches and schools in many places, and many of your people are accepting the Faith. But you, my girl, your words puzzle me. Were your family ever persecuted? Do you belong to the Church which we English clergy are helping to organise?"

Saya shook her head sorrowfully; the stranger seemed talking in riddles to her.

"I never heard of the Nippon Sei Kokwai," said she. "I live out of the world on the outskirts of this wood, and seldom go into Tokio; but for over two hundred and fifty years my family have been persecuted for the sake of Christ. Father told me when he died never to speak to strangers about it, but when you said you believed in Jesus Christ, I felt that I might trust you, sir." Here she lowered her voice to a whisper—"I am a descendant of those Kirisutans who were killed long ago. I scarcely know why they suffered, but the name of Jesus is dear to me. I want to know why they loved Him so; I want to learn to love Him too. Father loved Him, but said he could tell me but little about Him, for the Jesumons had to meet in secret for two hundred years, and they lost much of



THE FIRST SIX CLERGY OF THE NIPPON SEI, KOKWAI.

their Faith. All the papers that my ancestors left behind were put in a box and sealed up. Father never opened the box because he was afraid of being put to death, but he gave the box to me, and told me when I could worship Christ in open day then I might look at them."

"I hope that good time is not far off, dear child," said the clergyman with fervour. "I think that it was Jesus Christ Himself who led me to this house to-day; to-morrow I will tell you more about Him, and show you how you can best serve Him."

A few years later, Saya was walking in the pleasant ground adjoining the school-house of St. Hilda's Mission, Tokio, with a bright look on her face.

Who would not be bright, thought she, with all she had to thank God for? What a blessed day for her when she had first met the English missionary! What a happy life she had led at St. Hilda's, where she had been instructed in the Christian Faith, the Faith for which her forefathers had laid down their lives. Now she desired in her turn to be allowed to hand on the good news—which her ancestor had first brought to Japan. She had learned to love and revere the missionaries, and the English ladies who had been so kind to her. The past sad days seemed but a dream. And now another chapter of life was opening up. Was not Hara Loke, the schoolmaster at Hakodadi, to whom she was to be married coming to see her to-day to fix the date when they should be married? What a happy life they would spend together, he teaching

the Japanese boys about the Christian Faith, and she helping him, and minding the house. Hara was partly of Dutch origin, but had been a Buddhist till he became a Christian. He had become a first-rate school-master, and in course of time might be ordained. If only her father could have lived to see this day! Perhaps, where he was now, he did know.

Time was getting on. Hara would be here in a few hours, she must make her final preparations to receive him. Not that much was required, for the white crêpe silk dress, tied up with a pretty-coloured sash, was spotless, and the hair was always smooth and glossy. But she was restless till Hara came. She must be doing something. The sun fell in shafts of ruddy light across her chamber, and on the box which her father had given her, which she had preserved with much care. It had been opened long ago, and its contents glanced at, but the opening had brought back sad memories of martyrdom and suffering, so that it had been put back quickly into its corner again. But to-night a feeling took possession of Saya that she would like to examine the contents more thoroughly. She almost reproached herself for not having done so before. But the box had always been a sacred possession, kept in the privacy of the chamber from generation to generation.

As Hara was to be her husband, he ought to know all about them. When they were married they would look at its contents carefully together. Why need she trouble to do so now? Saya could not tell, but with a sudden impulse while sitting there, she drew

the box closer to her and opened it. There was not much to see; a plaster representation of the Crucifixion, another of the Nativity, one or two handsome pictures of Saints, and a drawing of a face with an attractive look, dressed in the garb of a friar. Underneath was written the name "Francis Xavier".

Saya turned the picture tenderly over; she had often heard her father speak of this good man. Then an old parchment diary, which she had not troubled to examine before, arrested her attention. It was an account of the last persecution of the Christians in olden times, written by one of her ancestors who was evidently a man of culture, of the great struggle which had taken place at a castle called Shimabara, near Nagasaki. The Christians had fortified themselves in this castle, and held out against overwhelming odds for months, but at last they had been obliged to give in. Not by denying Christ; no, thirty-seven thousand had suffered martyrdom sooner than do this, and Saya's cheek glowed as she read the story. The sun's rays grew lower and Hara would soon be here; but fascinated by the old diary, Saya, regardless of time, read on. She found out that every year on the 12th of January, the ordeal of trampling on the Cross was rigorously carried out. Should she close the diary and read no more? She felt half inclined to do so, yet something impelled her to go on. Then she came on a page which paled her cheek, and almost made her heart stop beating. It was the copy of a notice board, and ran as follows:—

"Christianity having been forbidden for several

years, if there should be any one suspected of being a Christian, it must be reported. The following rewards will be given :—

To the accuser of a paderen (priest) 500 pieces of silver.

To the accuser of a iruman (sub-priest) 300 pieces of silver.

To the accuser of a penitent (apostate) 300 pieces of silver.

To the accuser of a fellow-lodger and religionist, 100 pieces of silver.

“Even if the person (implicated) should be of the same house or religion 500 pieces of silver will be given according to the matter (reported).

“If it be concealed and afterwards discovered by other means, the individual in question, the group of five (a footnote in the parchment explained that they used to be divided into groups of five to track down every one and see what his Faith was) should be liable to conviction for the same kind of offence.

“(Signed) HARA LOKE,
“Town Clerk.”

Underneath this inscription was written in a trembling hand, evidently with great emotion :—

“Through this man’s directions several members of my family suffered death.

“(Signed) PAUL GOTO SHINKU.”

Saya read no more, but closed the old parchment book and shut the box. Her blood was all aflame



JAPANESE SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHOLARS.

The persecution of over two hundred years ago seemed but yesterday. What had not her own people suffered ! And Hara Loke's people—his ancestors—had been the cause, the murderers of her own kith and kin. If she had only read this parchment before her marriage with him had been arranged. Though Hara might himself be innocent, the blood of those men who had caused her own people to be put to death ran in his veins. She could not get over it ; she could not forgive it. She would tell him all to-night ; in fact, let him read the parchment for himself, and then tell him that she could not marry him.

A voice within her seemed to say : Is this what your ancestors would have done ? But she did not listen, she was too angry. The woes of eight generations seemed to cry to her across the ages.

Relief came at last with a flood of tears. But then the question pressed itself—what should she do ? Where could she go ? Her missionary teacher had told her, when in any trouble, to kneel down and say, " Lord Jesus, help me ! " She would do so now. She tried to pray, but the words would not come, only instead she seemed to see a figure hanging on a Cross, and hear a voice saying : " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do ".

Christ forgave His enemies. " Love your enemies," He had said. " Do good to them that hate you."

She tried again to pray.

" Lord Jesus," the words came more easily now, " help me to think no more of this, but to trust and love Hara as if this had never happened. I commend

him to Thy care. Thou wilt help him to make up for all the wicked acts his forefathers have done."

Then she rose from her knees, and went once more to the box. For one moment she glanced from her window across the road. There was no time to be lost. Hara was coming in the distance. In an adjoining room the *hibachi* was burning brightly and the kettle singing on the top. It was singing merrily, all ready to give Hara a cup of tea. She looked cautiously round; no one was about. The kettle was removed, and on the charcoal ashes was placed instead the old parchment book. When the last morsel had turned to white ash she drew a sigh of relief. Then she replaced the kettle, returned to her room, washed her hands, smoothed her hair, and went downstairs to meet Hara with a bright face. He should never know of this night's work.

There was his fine, manly figure standing in the doorway. And the look of joy on her lover's face at sight of her seemed to tell her she had done the right thing. Over the social cup of tea he had a great deal to say, how wonderfully his work in Hakodadi had been blessed, how he was longing for her to come and help him in it. How the fields were white to harvest, only waiting to be reaped. There was a great deal of prejudice to be removed, he said; many trials, many difficulties to be encountered. Was she afraid to go through them with him?

"No, I am not afraid, with you beside me," she said bravely. "The Cross is a wonderful power, it seems to conquer everything! To turn hatred into love, to

change enemies into friends, to make what at first seems impossible quite easy."

"Yes," said Hara, "and Japan can only become great and good through the Cross, through the preaching of Jesus Christ."

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